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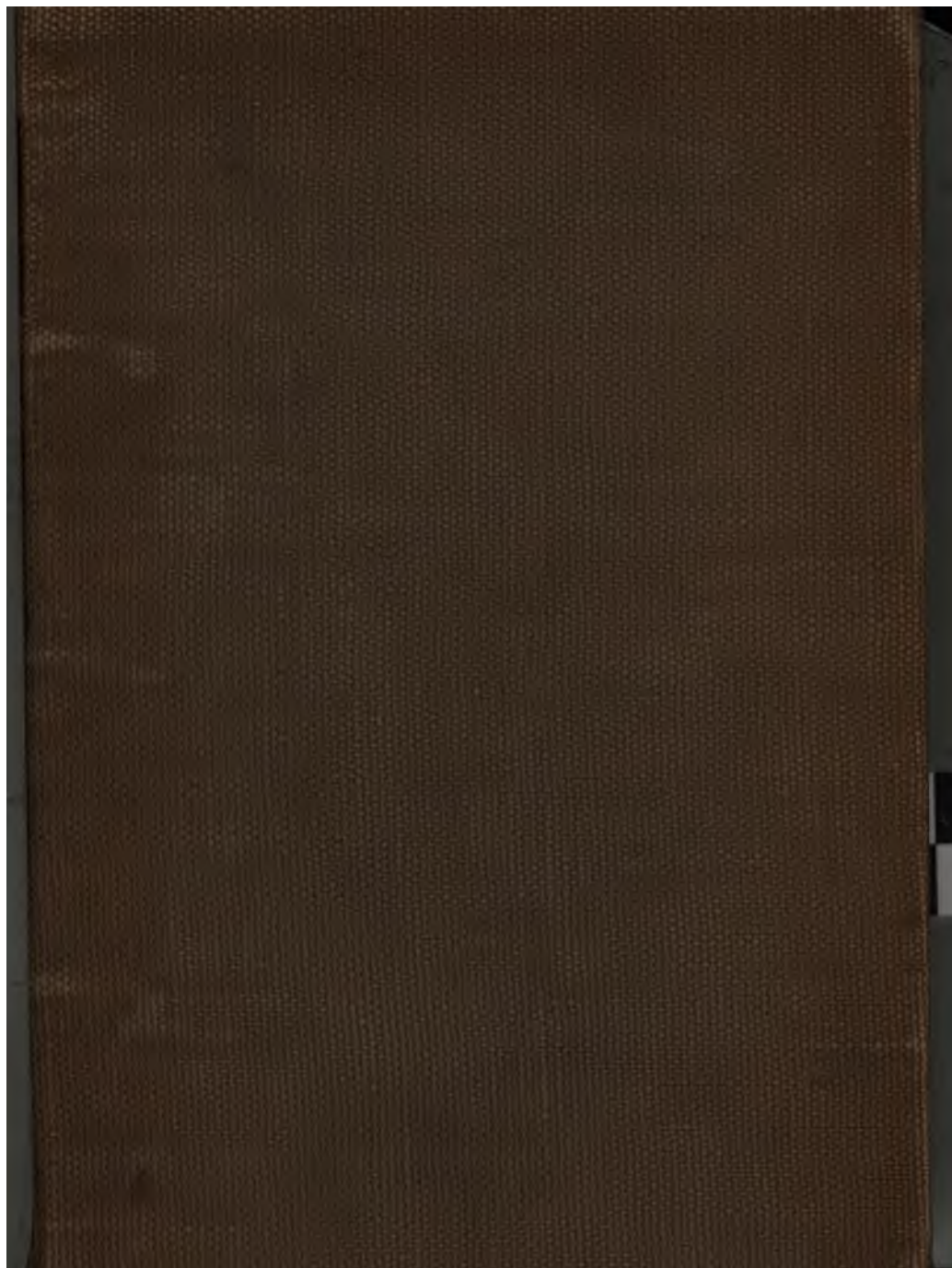
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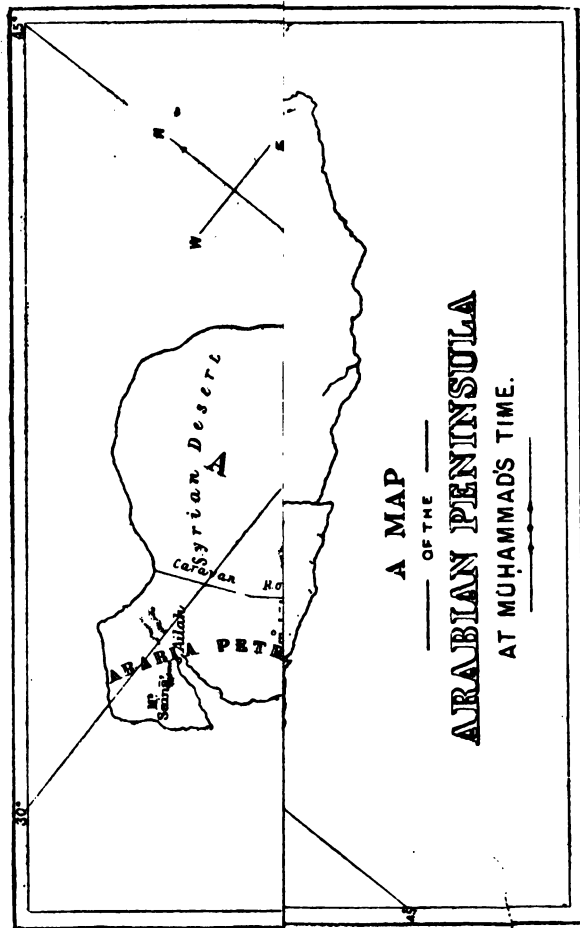












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HALF HOURS

WITH

M U H A M M A D

*Being a popular Account of the Prophet of Arabia  
and of his more immediate Followers*

TOGETHER WITH

A SHORT SYNOPSIS OF THE RELIGION HE  
FOUNDED.

BY

ARTHUR N. WOLLASTON, C.I.E.

H.M.'s INDIAN (HOME) SERVICE.

TRANSLATOR OF THE ANVAR-I SUHAILI, EDITOR OF THE PERSIAN MIRACLE PLAY,  
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## P R E F A C E.



THE opening of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of this year, when the minds of millions of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom are being vividly directed to the wonderful Empire which has been built up by British commerce and enterprise in the East, appeared to the writer to afford a fitting opportunity for the publication of a concise and popular account of the religion of Islam, which is professed by upwards of one-fourth of the population of the countries watered by the Indian Ocean, and by not less than fifty millions of British Indian subjects. The present little volume, the writer need scarcely say, does not pretend to offer anything new to the learned. It is a mere compilation from the pages of the best known original authors on the

subject of which it treats, and is meant only for the use of the general reader. Its sole aim is to present them with an accurate, brief, and haply interesting history of the great Arabian Prophet Muhammad, and the religion he founded.

A. N. WOLLASTON.

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# HALF HOURS

WITH

# MUHAMMAD.

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## CHAPTER I.

### HISTORY OF ARABIA PRIOR TO THE TIME OF MUHAMMAD.

BETWEEN the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf lies a triangular continent, arid and well-nigh waterless, save where the fertility of an occasional flood lends to the scene the freshness and charm of an oasis in the desert. Wild, desolate, bleak, dreary and monotonous, the sandy region of Arabia presents but few features to command interest; yet this land, so unattractive in its nature, so uninteresting in its aspect, has played an all-important part in the history of the world, for it can claim high honour and distinction as the birthplace of the Prophet of Islam—a genius who, whatever may be the verdict of posterity in regard to his “mission,” has had a more potent influence on the destinies of mankind than has been vouchsafed to any son of Adam who has left footprints on the sands of time.

The peninsula was divided by the Greeks and Romans into three portions—Arabia Felix, Arabia Petræa, and Arabia Deserta; but, according to Mr. Badger, “this nomenclature is unknown to the Arabs themselves—‘Barru’l-Arab,’ or ‘the Land of the Arabs,’ is the name given by them to the peninsula generally.

The other divisions are the 'Al-Hijaz,' which comprises Arabia Petræa and several of its adjacent territories; 'Al-Yaman,' including Arabia Felix, and the country forming the south-east extremity of the kingdom; and 'Najd' (literally high land), which may be termed Central Arabia."

"The first peopling of Arabia," says Sir William Muir, "is a subject on which we may in vain look for any light from the tradition of Arabia itself." There are, however, grounds for supposing that some descendants of Kush, the son of Ham, migrated to that country, where they ultimately became merged into the general mass of the community. These were followed by the offspring of Joktan, a descendant of Shem, a people who settled in the north of the land, while the kindred of Peleg, the brother of the last-named, established their tents in Mesopotamia. This latter individual was the ancestor of Abraham and Nahor his brother, from which two patriarchs descended five great branches of settlers:—(1.) The Ishmaelites, who inhabited the land from the northern extremity of the Red Sea, towards the mouth of the Euphrates. Amongst their branches were the well-known Nabathians—destined in after years to occupy a commanding position in Northern Arabia—and the Kedarenes, whose history was so famous in the annals of Arabia that the term eventually came to be applied by the Jews to the Bedouins in general. (2.) The Keturahites, who are known to posterity as settlers in the great desert in the north of Arabia. They derive their name from Ketura, who bore to Abraham six sons, all of whom migrated during the lifetime of their father. The tribe included, too, the familiar name of the Midianites, the offspring of the fourth of these last-mentioned sons. (3.) The Edomites, as their name implies, the descendants of Esau. (4.) The Nahorites, so called because their founders, Uz and Buz, were sons of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. (5.) The Moabites and Ammonites, descended from the sons of Lot. These last-

mentioned tribes extended still further north in the region of the Dead Sea.

For twenty centuries these peoples and nations "lived, moved, and had their being"; yet but little is recorded as to their history.

"Our knowledge of the race," (the quotation is again from Sir W. Muir's masterly Essay) "is confined to the casual accounts of the few border tribes which came in contact with the Jewish and Roman Governments, and to an occasional glimpse, as in the case of the Queen of Sheba and the Roman expedition, into the interior. We may not, however, doubt that, during the five-and-twenty centuries which elapsed between Abraham and Muhammad, the mutual relations of the Arab tribes were undergoing an uninterrupted succession of the revolutions and changes to which human society, especially when broken up into numerous independent fragments, is always exposed. Some of the tribes, like the Horims of old, were extirpated; others, as the Amalekites of Petra, driven from their original seats; some migrated to distant settlements, or merged into more extensive and commanding bodies; while intermarriage, conquest, and phylarchical revolution united races of different origin, and severed those sprung from a common stock. But of such changes, excepting in one or two of the border tribes, we have hardly any record."

It will suffice for present purposes to state generally that there was in the south-east of Arabia a dynasty founded by Kahtan, which flourished in Yaman between the years 800 B.C. and 500 B.C., from whom was descended Abd Shams Saba the Great, the founder of the city which gave its name to the Sabeans. This latter was in turn the progenitor of Himyar and Kahlan, from whom the whole Arab-speaking race are supposed to have sprung. The descendants of the former patriarch founded their homes chiefly in towns, and led a fixed and settled mode of life, while their kinsmen, having a migratory instinct, chose the unsettled and wandering existence which has throughout all ages been the delight of the children of the desert.

As regards the north of Arabia, there were two

kingdoms known as Hira and Ghassan, both of which states owed their origin to the spirit of migration which, from various causes, led to a general movement of the Yaman tribes to more genial and flourishing spots around the valley of the Euphrates. The former city was founded about the year A.D. 200, and soon assumed such a prominence and splendour as to lend to its ruler the proud title of "Prince of Hira." For more than 300 years this dynasty exercised a powerful influence in the affairs of Arabia ; but, exposed to attacks of the Romans on the one side, and the Persians on the other, it needed but the destruction of time to lay in the dust a Government of which the glory would have been quenched in the stream of Oblivion had its traditions not been handed down by the poets and men of letters who in its palmy days used to flock to the Court of Hira. The decline and fall of the dynasty in question is so romantic as to merit a few passing words.

Towards the close of the sixth century the sceptre of Hira was in the hands of Noman the Fifth. This sovereign had been educated by Adi, one of the most renowned poets of the day, who, on the termination of this important duty, betook himself to the Court of Persia, where he received the post of Arabic Secretary to the reigning monarch.

"In A.D. 581," thus states Sir W. Muir, "he was despatched on a specific embassy to Constantinople, and entrusted with a rich present for the Emperor Tiberius. He travelled back by the imperial relays of horses, and by a route calculated to convey the largest idea of the power and resources of the Roman Empire. On his return to Medain, or Ctesiphon, he obtained leave of absence to revisit Hira, where he was received by the prince and the people with triumphant acclamation. On this occasion he met, at the Church of Tuma, Hind, the granddaughter of the reigning prince, Mundzir the Fourth, and daughter of his own pupil Noman. As the damsel partook of the Sacrament, Adi caught a glimpse of her, and became enamoured. His passion was reciprocated, and though she was scarce eleven years old, they were united in marriage."

Years rolled on, and we find the beautiful Hind, charming as she was, secluded and buried to the world in a convent, whither she had retired consequent on the murder of her husband by order of his former pupil, the faithless Noman. She lived, however, to witness a terrible retribution at the hands of fate, for the blood-stained assassin, some years subsequent to the crime thus tarnishing his fair name, was deposed by a conquering army which invaded his territories and laid waste his possessions.

The Princess Hind was then upwards of ninety years of age, yet for political motives the Muhammadan conqueror repaired to the convent and demanded her hand in marriage. The answer betokened that time had neither dimmed the clearness of her perception nor quenched the pride of her noble birth, for she at once scorned the union, the object of which was clearly recognized. "If it were my youth or my beauty" (such were the words of the haughty dame) "that dictated the proposal, I should not refuse; but your desire is that you may say, 'The kingdom of Noman, and with it his daughter, have passed into my hands.' Is not that your thought?" So the high-spirited matron refused to quit the cloister for the throne, and passed in retirement the short remaining period of her long and chequered career.

The fate of Noman was striking and remarkable:—Zayd, the son of Adi, bent upon revenging the death of his father, hit upon a method as "singular as it proved successful." The story is told by Sir W. Muir.

"He pictured in warm colours the charms of the women of Hira before the King of Persia, who readily adopted the suggestion that some of the fair relatives of his vassal might well adorn the royal haram. An embassy charged with this errand was despatched to Noman, who, surprised and alarmed by the demand, expressed aloud his wonder that the Monarch of Persia was not satisfied with the antelope beauties of his own land. The term was equivocal, and Noman was denounced as having insulted the females of Persia by likening

them to cows! The wrath of the Chosroes fell heavily upon his ungallant vassal, and he fled from Hira. After vainly wandering in search of allies among the Arab tribes, he left his arms in the custody of Hani, a chief of the Bani Bakr, and in despair delivered himself up to the King of Persia. The unfortunate prince was passed in mockery between two long rows of lovely girls splendidly attired, and by each was taunted with the question, whether *she* was a Persian *cow*? He was cast into prison, and there died or was murdered. Thus ended the Lakhmite Dynasty in the year A.D. 605, having lasted for the long space of 327 years."

The Government of Hira then passed into the hands of a chieftain of the tribe of Tay, who had rendered good service to the King of Persia; but the Arabs, indignant at the murder of Noman, began to show signs of disaffection, by plundering and pillaging the Iranian villages in their neighbourhood. Various expedients were adopted by the "King of Kings" to put a stop to these raids, but in vain, and at length a vast army was sent to crush the rebellion. The danger which pressed upon the Arabs caused them to flock from all parts of the country to a spot called Zu-kar, under the standard of a warrior by name Hantzala, who had by common consent been chosen to lead them on to victory or death. The battle was fierce and bloody: nor, indeed, could it have been otherwise, seeing that the Arabs, fighting as they were for national independence, were maddened to desperation; and history, too, relates that, lest there should be signs of wavering on the part of any faint-hearted son of the desert, their commander, previous to the commencement of hostilities, severed with his own hand the girths of the camels on which were seated his wife and the other women of his tribe—an indication that, as defeat would involve captivity and dishonour, the struggle was deadly, the contest mortal. Victory alternated from hour to hour, but nothing could for long resist the desperate efforts of the lion-hearted Arabs, and in the end the Persian army had to succumb to the yoke of their conquering

ivals. This battle, so momentous in its results, occurred in A.D. 611, just at the time Muhammad had commenced his career; and thus it chanced that the prophet of Arabia, instead of finding an united race subject to the strong hand of the Monarch of Persia, met with an agglomeration of tribes who, rendering but half-hearted allegiance to a satrap holding nominal sway in the kingdom of Hira, were, in reality, independent of all control. The advantage which this altered condition of affairs afforded to the founder of the Muhammadan faith is too striking to pass unnoticed, for on the memorable battle-day of Zu-kar Islam tottered in the balance.

The Ghassanide kingdom, situated on the western side of the Syrian desert, was founded about the year A.D. 120 by a body of Arabs who migrated from Yaman. Pursuing their journey northward, they pitched their tents near a fountain of the name of Ghassan, where they remained for a period sufficiently lengthened to cause their race to be known by the name of the auspicious spring which supplied them with the one great necessary of life in the parched plains of a sandy desert. Towards the close of the third century they had so successfully established themselves, that the Roman authorities recognized their chief, Thalaba by name, as "Phylarch," or King of the Ghassanides; but having no fixed seat of government, each successive prince chose his own capital, and the history of the dynasty is confused, perplexing, and uncertain. The Phylarchs, however, appear to have had intimate relations with the Roman Court, by whom, towards the middle of the sixth century, the title of king was bestowed upon the faithful Ghassanide ally who had at that time rendered assistance to the Emperor Justinian against his enemies the Persians. This honour the newly-created sovereign subsequently requited by beguiling the Romans to destruction in the glare of a pestilential sun, while he betook himself elsewhere on the supposed errand of foiling the plans of the Monarch of Persia—an act of treachery and deceit which secured for himself the



booty of a rich tract of country. Towards the close of the sixth century the glory of the Ghassanide dynasty was on the wane, and Sir W. Muir draws attention to the significant fact that, as observed by a Muslim writer, their decadence "was preparing the way for the glories of the Arabian Prophet"—a truth which was verified by the circumstance that in A.D. 637, Jabala VI., the last of the race, embraced Islam and joined the standard of the Faithful, though his zeal for the new religion which he had adopted was evanescent, and he retired to Constantinople as a renegade from Muhammadism to ponder in the leisure of obscurity over the marvellous and rapid spread of the doctrines which he had cast aside as beneath the notice of a Ghassanide monarch!

Mention has been made of the Prophet of Arabia, but before proceeding to sketch his singular and interesting career, it will be necessary to refer to the origin and ancestry of the tribe from which he sprang.

When Hagar was cast forth by the Patriarch Abraham, she journeyed the wilderness with her son Ishmael in search of water; the lad, too young to endure the fatigue of wandering about with his mother—so runs the Eastern legend—was left alone for a while in the valley of Mecca—alone in the mighty solitude of an Eastern waste! Crying and sobbing, the hapless child's screams served but to increase his fear and anger; so he betook himself to the infantile freak of kicking. Just at this moment his mother returned, having wandered in the frenzy of despair to and fro from the little hill of Marwa to that of Safa, seeking water to quench the agonies of thirst, which threatened to destroy alike herself and the offspring which was the solace of her life. What was her astonishment to find, under the feet of the peevish and terrified lad, a stream of water, which bubbled up at the very spot where he had kicked the ground. Nor was the store of wonders as yet exhausted, for we are told that a tribe, supposed to be the Amalekites, who happened to be in the vicinity,

whither they had been attracted by a flight of birds hovering over the place, came to the spot, and, finding the spring, at once settled in the locality. With them Ishmael remained till he was seven years of age, when his father Abraham, following the commands of God, went forth to a mountain to sacrifice his son. In vain did the arch-fiend—who on this occasion assumed the form of a human being—endeavour to dissuade the Patriarch from his purpose, and thereby cause him to manifest distrust in the mercy of his Almighty Creator. The “friend of God,” as he is called in the East, was firm to his purpose to sacrifice his son ; but as he lifted up his hand to slay the hapless youth, an angel from heaven darted forth and bade him desist. The Patriarch had shown his willingness to obey the mandates of the Lord of Creation, even when it involved the loss of a beloved son : enough ! so a ram was offered up as a sacrifice in place of the lad. In due course Ishmael took unto himself a wife from amongst the maidens of the Amalekites. About this time two tribes from Yaman, known respectively in the annals of Arabia as the people of Jorhom and Katura, appeared in the regions where the Amalekites were settled—the latter, while endeavouring, though not with much success, to oppose their new comers, chanced to be harassed by a plague of ants, and in sore distress were eventually forced to succumb to their more fortunate rivals, to whom Ishmael, probably of necessity, transferred his allegiance. It so happened that, during the casual absence of her husband from home, the wife of this young chieftain committed an act of inhospitality in reference to her father-in-law, Abraham, whereupon the latter, enraged at a proceeding which, amongst Eastern nations, is considered an offence of the blackest dye, persuaded his son to divorce the luckless lady, and take to himself a spouse from amongst the strangers who had succeeded to power. So it was that the daughter of the Jorhom chief graced the tent of Ishmael the son of the desert. On the occasion of one of his visits, the Patriarch Abraham, in

company with his son, erected the Kaba at Mecca, and re-established the ancient rites of pilgrimage on the sacred spot.

"After the death of Ishmael, and his son Nabit," thus writes Sir W. Muir, "the management of the Temple devolved on Modad, the Jorhom chief, who held the imposts of the northern or upper part of Mecca, while Samayda, the Katura chief, held the southern. But a quarrel having arisen between the two tribes, the Bani Jorhom, aided by the descendants of Ishmael, expelled the Bani Katura, who joined and were lost amongst the Amalekites. From this point (which the juxtaposition with Ishmael would make at least 2,000 years anterior to Muhammad) to Adnan, who lived a little before the Christian era, the legend is blank; and although the ready pen of the traditionists has filled up the space by a list of Muhammad's progenitors derived from Jewish sources, yet Muhammad himself never traced his pedigree higher than Adnan, and declared that all who went further back were guilty of fabrication and falsehood.

Adnan, who is supposed to have flourished B.C. 130, left two sons, Madd, and Akk, whose numerous offspring spread by degrees throughout the whole extent of the peninsula. Passing over an interval of rather more than three centuries, during which various chiefs appeared on the scene—some known to fame as the founders of families, others lost in the maze of obscurity which surrounds the annals of the period—the pen of the historian narrates that A.D. 134 gave birth to a chieftain, Nadhr by name, the grandfather of Fihir (born A.D. 200), which latter was surnamed "Quraish"—an appellation to which the events of subsequent years have given the significance which attaches to aught which concerns the ancestry of the Prophet of Arabia. As to the derivation of the term, a variety of conjectures have been hazarded. Some are of opinion that the word means "noble," while others, admitting this, consider that it was originally a proper name, to which circumstance the meaning in question, which it afterwards came to possess, owes its origin. Then, again, on the other

hand, there are reasons for supposing that Nadhr had a guide called Quraish, whence that chieftain's caravan was called the "Caravan of Quraish," till at length the appellation gradually attached to himself. Another surmise is that the term is taken from a fish bearing that name, or from "Qursh," a word signifying "a high-bred camel." Lastly, others refer it to a root which signifies trade. Towards the close of the second century a body of Azdites pitched their tents near Mecca, whereupon the Jorhomites, who up to that time had retained their supremacy, endeavoured to expel the unwelcome settlers; but success did not meet their efforts, and the intruders took up their abode permanently in this region. After awhile some of the victors migrated towards Syria, and the rest, known in history as the Bani Khoza (the remnant), combining with some neighbouring tribes, attacked the Jorhomites and drove them out of the country.

While these struggles were going on in one locality, the Madites, the ancestors of the Quraish, were engaged in an attempt to oust some further adventurers belonging to the Kodhaite tribe, who had endeavoured to obtain a footing between Mecca and Tayif. They were successful, and thereupon a grand contest ensued for the charge of the Kaba between them and the Azdite tribes, who had expelled the Jorhomites. The children of Nadhr gained the victory, the fruits of which, however, after a brief interval, were snatched from them by the Bani Khoza, who are said to have retained the Government of Mecca for upwards of two centuries.

Such continued to be the position of parties till the beginning of the fifth century, by which time the Quraish had so greatly advanced in numbers and power as to rival their Khozaite rulers. It was reserved for Qussai (the progenitor of Muhammad) to assert the right of his tribe to the guardianship of the Kaba, and the Government of Mecca. The outline of his romantic story is as follows:—Kilab, the fifth in descent from Fihir Quraish, died leaving two sons, Zohra and Zayd;

the former grown up, the latter, who was born about A.D. 400, being but an infant. The widow of the deceased chieftain married a man of the Bani Ozra tribe, and followed him with the lad Zayd to her new home in the highlands south of Syria, where she gave birth to another son called Riza. When Zayd grew up he was called "Qussai," because of the separation from his father's house ; but at last, learning the noble rank of his ancestry, he resolved to return to Mecca, and travelled thither with a company of the Ozra pilgrims. At Mecca he was recognized by his brother Zohra, and at once received into the position which his birth entitled him to hold. Qussai was a man of commanding person and of an energetic and ambitious temper. He was treated with great distinction by Holail the Khozaite king, who gave him his daughter Hobba in marriage, and permitted him—or rather perhaps his wife—to assume the immediate management of the Kaba, and some functions attaching to the Government of the city. On the death of the benefactor who had bestowed on him power and position, Qussai, now possessing four grown-up sons, and himself being a man of wealth and influence, perceived his opportunity, and having canvassed among the Quraish for support, bound them together in a secret league. Further, as the Khoza are said to have outnumbered the latter tribe, he wrote to his brother Riza to aid him at the ensuing pilgrimage with an armed band of the Bani Ozra.

From remote times the Bani Sufa (a distant branch collateral with the Quraish) had been the possessors of certain privileges in connection with the temple at Mecca, amongst the rest the highly-prized right of dismissing the multitudes who annually repaired as pilgrims to the sacred precincts. The time had, however, now arrived when Qussai, conscious of his strength, determined to question this privilege : so, stepping forth before the assembled throng, he claimed the honour in question. A dispute took place, and weapons were drawn, but after a sharp encounter, in which Riza, with

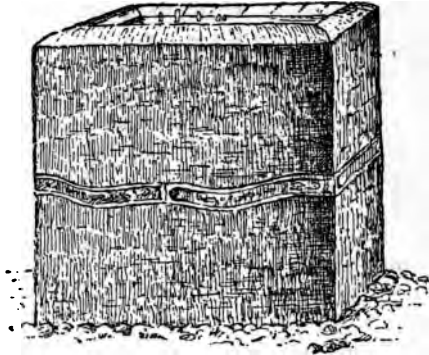
300 of the Bani Ozra, rushed to the succour of Qussai, the Sufa yielded the coveted office to their opponents.

The Khoza regarded with jealousy the usurpation of their prescriptive right, and began to entertain suspicions that Qussai would seek to snatch from them their own hereditary title to the supremacy over the Hijaz : whereupon they prepared to resist, and associated with themselves some quondam allies, who had aided in the expulsion of the Jorhomites. The Quraish rallied round Qussai, who, as before, was supported by Riza and his comrades. A second but more general and bloody action ensued. The victory remained uncertain, for the carnage was great on both sides, and the combatants naturally agreed to a truce, surrendering the decision of their claims into the hands of an aged sage named Amr. The umpire affirmed the pretensions of Qussai, yielded to him the guardianship of the Kaba and the Government of Mecca : further, still more strongly to mark the justice of Qussai's position, Amr decreed the price of blood for all men killed on the side of the latter, while the dead amongst the Khoza were allowed to pass unavenged by fine.

Such is the most generally received account of the way in which the command of Mecca passed into the hands of Qussai. Some, however, are of opinion that Holail, the Khozaite king, openly held that Qussai was best entitled to succeed him, and therefore left to his son-in-law the coveted inheritance. Others maintain that the monarch in question gave up the care of the Kaba, with its keys, to his daughter Hobba, and appointed an individual of the name of Ghubshan to assist her ; wherupon Qussai—so runs the legend—made the man intoxicated and purchased from him, when in a state of incapability, the control of the sacred city in exchange for a skin of wine and some camels—a proceeding which the Khoza resenting, hostilities ensued. A third statement is that the last-mentioned tribe, being attacked by a deadly pestilence, which nearly extirpated them, resolved to evacuate Mecca,

selling or otherwise disposing of their houses in the city.

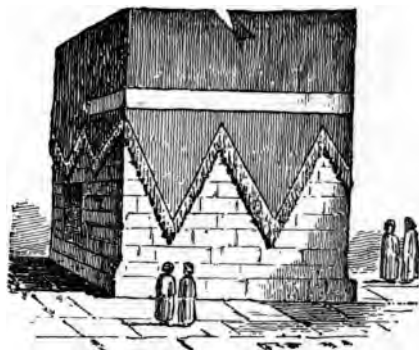
However, be the circumstances what they may, it is beyond question that towards the middle of the fifth century Qussai ruled supreme at Mecca. The first act of his authority was to bring within the valley his kinsmen of Quraish descent, many of whom had been wont to live in the surrounding glens and mountains: this done, the town was laid out anew, a separate quarter being allotted to each family. But so large an influx of inhabitants, added to the regular distribution of the



KABA, FIG. I.

land, swelled the city far beyond its previous bounds, and the site of the new habitations trenched upon the acacias and brushwood of the valley. It chanced that the superstition of the place had invested the trees with so peculiar a sanctity that the people feared to remove them. Without hesitation Qussai, superior to such scruples, seized a hatchet, the Quraish followed his example, and the wilderness was soon cleared. Owing to his having effected the reunion of his clan, Qussai was called "Mujammi," or the "Gatherer." The next civic work of this enterprising chieftain was to build a Council House or Town Hall, called "Daru'n-nadwa,"

near the Kaba, having its porch opening towards that sacred spot. Here all political movements were discussed, and social ceremonies solemnized. In this building, too, girls first assumed the dress of womanhood, and within its revered precincts marriages were celebrated. Thence all caravans set forth, and thither the traveller, on returning from his journey, first bent his steps. When war was imminent it was there that the banner was mounted upon its staff by Qussai himself, or by one of his sons. The assumption of the presidency in the Hall of Council riveted the authority



KABA, FIG. 2.

of its builder as the Shaikh of Mecca, and governor of the country, and "both before and after his death"—such is the language of one of the most famous of Moslem historians—"his ordinances were obeyed and venerated as people obey and venerate the observances of religion."

Besides these civil offices, Qussai possessed the chief religious dignities connected with the worship of the nation ; thus he held the keys, and with them the control, of the Kaba, or holy of holies, in the temple of Mecca ; his was the privilege of giving drink to the votaries who were wont annually to repair to the sacred



city, and providing them with food—prerogatives which in the eyes of the generous Arabs, invested his name with a peculiar lustre. During the pilgrimage leathern bags of water were, at his instigation, hung up at Mecca, and other places in the vicinity, and he stimulated the liberality of the inhabitants to subscribe annually an ample fund, which was expended by himself in the gratuitous distribution of food to the pilgrims. With strange inconsistency, though it was ostensibly to secure the right of marshalling the processions of pilgrims on their return from Mecca that he drew his sword, he did not, when established in power, personally exercise this prerogative, which in common with some other privileges he delegated to the hands of subordinates.

The last days of the Patriarch are portrayed by the Arab historian "Waqidi" in terms of simplicity which enhances the charm of all that proceeds from the pen of a writer whose language recalls in some measure the unaffected grandeur of early biblical narrative:—

"In process of time Qussai became old and infirm. Abdu'l Dar was the oldest of his sons, but he lacked influence and power, and his brethren raised themselves up against him. Wherefore Qussai resigned all his offices into the hands of his firstborn, saying: 'Thus wilt thou retain thine authority over thy people, even though they raise themselves up against thee: let no man enter the Kaba unless thou hast opened it unto him: nor let any banner of the Quraish be mounted upon its staff for war, excepting by thine own hands: let no one drink at Mecca, but of the water which thou hast drawn, nor any pilgrim eat therein save of thy food: and let not the Quraish resolve upon any business but in thy Council Hall.' So he gave him up the Hall of Council, and the custody of the Holy House and the giving of drink and of food, that he might unite his brethren unto him. And Qussai died and was buried in Al Hajun."

So passed Qussai from the stage of life, towards the middle of the fifth century of the Christian era.

For a time, and not without considerable difficulty, the eldest son, Abdu'l Dar, contrived, notwithstanding

his weakness, to retain at least a nominal supremacy. But he enjoyed little influence in comparison with his brother Abd Manaf, on whom the real management of public affairs devolved, and who laid out fresh quarters for the growing population of the city. Before the death of Abdu'l Dar the whole of the offices of State and religion passed into the hands of his sons ; but they all died within a short space of time, and his grandsons, who inherited the dignities of the family, were of too tender years effectually to maintain their rights. Meanwhile, the sons of Abd Manaf having grown up and continued in possession of their father's influence, conspired to wrest from the descendants of Abdu'l Dar the hereditary offices bequeathed by Qussai. Amongst the new candidates for power one Hashim took the lead, grounding his claim on the superior dignity attaching to his branch of the family. But the descendants of Abdu'l Dar refused to cede any of their rights, and an open rupture ensued. The society of Mecca was equally divided between the two factions, one portion of the Quraish siding with the claimants to, and the others with the actual possessors of, the offices, while but few remained neutral. Both parties swore that they would prosecute their claim and be faithful amongst themselves "so long as there remained in the sea sufficient water to wet a tuft of wool." To add stringency to their oath, Hashim and his faction filled a dish with aromatic substances ; this done and having placed it close to the Kaba and put their hands therein, they rubbed them upon the Holy House and invoked the aid of the gods to their enterprise. The opposite party similarly dipped *their* hands into a bowl of blood and sought the assistance of the powers of Heaven. The opponents now made ready for the contest, and the ranks were already marshalled within sight of each other, when for some unexplained cause they mutually called for a truce. The conditions proposed were that Hashim and his party should have the offices of providing food and water for the pilgrims,

the descendants of Abdu'l Dar, as hitherto, retaining the custody of the Kaba and the Hall of Council, as well as the right of raising the banner. Upon these terms peace was restored and the disputants returned to their homes, each faction content with its bloodless victory.

Hashim thus installed in the office of entertaining the pilgrims, fulfilled his duties with a princely magnificence. Not only was he himself possessed of great riches, but many others of the Quraish had also by trading acquired much wealth. He appealed to them, therefore, as his grandfather Qussai had done before him: "Ye are neighbours of God and the keepers of his house. The pilgrims who come honouring the sanctity of this temple are His guests, and it is meet that ye should entertain them above all other guests. Ye are especially chosen of God and exalted unto this high dignity; therefore, honour his guests and refresh them. For, from distant cities on their lean and jaded camels they come unto you fatigued and harassed, with hair dishevelled and bodies covered with the dust and squalor of the long way. Then invite them hospitably and furnish them with water in abundance." Hashim set the example by a munificent expenditure from his own resources, and the Quraish were not backward in contributing, every man according to his ability, though a fixed cess was also levied upon them all. Water sufficient for the prodigious assemblage was collected in cisterns close by the Kaba from the wells of Mecca; and in reservoirs of leather at the various stations frequented by the votaries who annually repaired to the sacred city. The distribution of food commenced upon the day on which the pilgrims set out for the sacred city and Arafat (of which more anon), and continued till the assemblage dispersed. During this period they were entertained with pottage of meat and bread, or of butter and barley, variously prepared, and with the favourite national repast of dates.

Thus Hashim supported the credit of Mecca. But his name is even more renowned for the splendid charity

by which he relieved the necessities of his fellow citizens when the latter were by a long-continued famine reduced to extreme distress. On that occasion he proceeded to Syria, and purchasing an immense stock of bread, packed it in panniers, and conveyed it upon camels to Mecca. There the provisions were cooked, the camels slaughtered and roasted, which done, the whole was divided amongst the people.

The foreign relations of the Quraish were managed solely by the sons of Abd Manaf; with the Roman authorities and the Ghassanide Prince a treaty was concluded by Hashim himself, who received from the Emperor a rescript authorizing the tribe to travel to and from Syria in safety. He also secured the friendship of the inhabitants on the road by promising to carry their goods without hire. One brother, too, Abd Shams by name, made a treaty with a neighbouring people in pursuance of which the Quraish traded to Abyssinia; while his other brothers concluded alliances respectively with the King of Persia, who allowed them to traffic in Iraq and Fars, and with the Kings of Himyar, who encouraged commercial operations in Yaman. Thus the affairs of the Quraish prospered in every direction.

To Hashim is further ascribed the credit of having established upon an uniform footing the mercantile expeditions of his people, so that every winter a caravan set out regularly for Yaman and Abyssinia, while in the summer a second visited the marts of Syria.

The success and glory of Hashim exposed him to the envy of the son of his brother, Abd Shams. This chief, Omaiya by name, was opulent, and he expended his riches in a vain attempt to rival the splendour of his uncle's munificence. The Quraish perceived the endeavour, and turned it into ridicule. Omaiya was enraged. "Who," said he, "is Hashim?" So he defied him to a trial of tongues, each party endeavouring to establish his pretensions to superiority. Hashim

would willingly have avoided a wrangle with one so much his inferior both in years and dignity ; but the people, who loved such exhibitions, would not excuse him : so the proud chieftain consented ; but on the express stipulation that the vanquished party should lose fifty black-eyed camels, and pass ten years in exile from Mecca. A Khozaite soothsayer was appointed umpire, who, having heard the pretensions of both, pronounced Hashim to be the victor. The conqueror took the fifty camels, and slaughtering them in the desert, fed therewith all the people who were present, while in turn Omaiya set out for Syria, and remained there the stipulated period of his banishment. The circumstance is carefully and superstitiously noted by the Muhammadan writers as the first trace of that rivalry between the Hashamite and Omaiya factions which in after ages shook the Khalifat to its base.

Hashim, now advanced in years, chanced, on a mercantile journey to the north, to visit Madīna with a party of the Quraish. As he traded there in one of the markets of the city he was attracted by the graceful form of a female, directing her people from an elevated position how to buy and sell for her. She was discreet, and withal comely, and made a tender impression upon the heart of Hashim. He enquired of the citizens whether she was married or single, and they answered that she was divorced. They added, however, that the dignity of Salma, daughter of Amr—the name which the fair enchantress bore—was so great amongst her people, that she would not marry, save on the condition that she should remain mistress of her own actions, and have at pleasure the power of divorce. Hashim, in spite of the reservations in question, offered her his hand in marriage—to such an alliance she was nothing loth, for she was well aware of his renown and noble birth. So he married her, and made a great feast to the Quraish, of whom forty were present with the caravan. The result of this union was a son named Shebau'l Hamd, born (A.D.

497) at her father's home in Madina, whither the bride had retired.

Scarce had the sixth century dawned upon mankind than Hashim was gathered to his fathers, an event which is generally supposed to have occurred in the year A.D. 510. He left his dignities to his elder brother Al Muttalib, who conducted the entertainment of the pilgrims in so splendid a style as to gain the epithet "Al Faiz," or "The Munificent." Meanwhile his little nephew Sheba was growing up under the care of the widowed mother at Madina. Several years after his brother's death, Al Muttalib chanced to meet a traveller from the latter city, who described in glowing terms the noble bearing of the young Meccan. The chieftain's heart smote him because he had so long left his brother's son in a distant locality, and he set out forthwith to bring the lad to his ancestral home. Arrived at Madina, he enquired for the child, and found him practising archery among the boys of the city. Recognizing the youth at once from his likeness to his father, he embraced him, wept over him, and clothed him in a suit of Yaman raiment. His mother sent to invite Al Muttalib to her house, but the zealous chieftain refused to untie a knot of his camel's accoutrements until he had carried off the child to Mecca. Salma, taken by surprise at the proposal, was passionate in her grief. Al Muttalib, however, reasoned with her, and explained the great advantages which her son was losing by absence from his father's house. At length the fond mother, seeing the man's determined action, relented, and in a few days the lad turned his back upon the home of his childhood. Reaching Mecca in broad light of day, the people supposed that the new comer was a slave whom his master had purchased and exclaimed, "Abdu'l Muttalib," which being interpreted is, "the servant of Al Muttalib;" though the necessary explanations at once convinced them of their error, the appellation clung to the son of Hashim for the rest of his life.

Al Muttalib proceeded in due time to instal his nephew in the possession of his father's property; but Naufal, another uncle, interposed and violently deprived the young man of his paternal estate. Abdu'l Muttalib, who by this time had reached years of discretion, appealed to his tribe to aid him in resisting the usurpation of his rights, but they declined to interfere. He then wrote to his maternal relatives at Madina, who no sooner received the intelligence than eighty mounted men, with Abu Asad at their head started for Mecca. Abdu'l Muttalib went forth to meet the party, and invited them to his house, but Abu Asad refused to alight till he had called Naufal to account. So proceeding straightway to the yard of the Holy House he found the man he sought seated in the midst of the Quraish chiefs. Naufal rose to welcome the new comer, who, however, refused to accept the proffered hospitality, and drawing his sword sternly declared he would plunge it into the Meccan's bosom unless the latter forthwith reinstated the orphan in his rights. The oppressor was daunted, and agreed to make restitution, ratifying his pledge on oath before the assembled multitude.

Some years after these events, Al Muttalib died while on a mercantile expedition to Yaman, whereupon Abdu'l Muttalib succeeded to the office of entertaining the pilgrims. But for a long time he was destitute of power and influence, and having but one son to assist him in the assertion of his claims, he found it difficult to cope with the opposing faction of the Quraish. However, good fortune had not deserted him, for, at this period of his career, he discovered the ancient Meccan well "Zamzam," in after years immortalized by the devotions of countless myriads of devotees who with its waters purge their souls of the guilts and sins of corrupt humanity. It happened thus: Finding it laborious to procure water from the scattered wells of Mecca, and store it in cisterns by the Kaba, perhaps, too, aware by tradition of the existence of a well in

the vicinity, he made diligent search, and at last came upon the circle of its venerable masonry. It was a remnant of the palmy days of the city, when a rich and incessant stream of commerce flowed in this direction. Centuries had elapsed since the trade had ceased, and with it followed the desertion of Mecca, and the neglect of the well, which had been choked up, either accidentally or by design, the remembrance thereof being so indistinct that even the site of the spring was unknown.

As Abdu'l Muttalib, aided by his son, dug deeper and deeper, he came upon two golden gazelles, with the swords and suits of armour which had been buried there by the Jorhomite king more than three centuries before. The rest of the Quraish, envying him these treasures, demanded a share in them. They asserted their right also to the well itself, which they declared has been possessed by their common ancestor Ishmael. Abdu'l Muttalib was not powerful enough to resist the claim, but he agreed to refer their several pretensions to the decision of *Hobal*, the god whose image was within the Kaba. So six arrows were taken; two coloured yellow for the Kaba, two painted black for Abdu'l Muttalib and two stained white for the Quraish. Lots were then cast, with a result that the gazelles fell to the share of the temple, the swords and suits of armour became the lot of Abdu'l Muttalib, while the Quraish drew blanks. The latter tribe could not avoid acquiescing in the divine will, and were perforce constrained to relinquish the pretensions they had put forward. Abdu'l Muttalib beat out the golden gazelles into plates, and fixed them by way of ornament to the door of the Kaba, while he hung up the swords before the entrance as a protection to the treasures within, at the same time he added a more effectual guard, in the shape of a lock and key, both of which, so it is said, were made of gold.

The plentiful flow of fresh water which soon filled the "Zamzam," was a great triumph to its fortunate possessor. All other wells in Mecca were now deserted, and this alone patronized; but above all, from this



source the pilgrims were henceforth supplied, and the liquid stream soon began to share in the sacredness attaching to the Kaba. The fame and influence of Abdu'l Muttalib rapidly commenced to become greater and greater, and a large family of sons, born to him in later years, added to the estimation in which he was held. For a lengthened period, it is true, he had but one son; feeling so strongly his weakness and inferiority in contending with the large and influential families of those who, in his early career, opposed and thwarted him, he vowed a vow that if destiny should ever grant him ten sons, he would devote one of them as a sacrifice to the Fates. Years rolled on, and the rash father at last found himself surrounded by the fatal number in question, the sight of whom, daily reminded him of his pledge. But the oath was sacred and could not be disregarded; bidding his sons accompany him to the Kaba, each was made to write his name upon a lot, which done, the whole of these were made over to the Intendant of the Temple, who cast them in the usual manner. The fatal arrow fell upon the youngest and best beloved of all Abdu'l Muttalib's sons. The father was inconsolable, but the vow devoting him to the gods, must needs be kept, and the sacrifice be made ready. His daughters wept and clung around the fond parent, who was willingly persuaded to cast lots between the lad and ten camels, the current fine for the blood of a man. If the Deity should accept the ransom, there need be no scruple in sparing the son. But the lot a second time fell upon the hapless youth. Again, and with the same result, it was cast between him and twenty camels. At each successive trial Abdu'l Muttalib added ten camels to the stake, but Fortune was inexorable. It was now the tenth throw, and the ransom had reached a hundred camels, when the lot at last fell upon the unfortunate animals. The father joyfully released the young man from his impending fate, and taking the creatures slaughtered them as food for the inhabitants of Mecca, the residue

being left to the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, for the family of Abdu'l Muttalib refused to taste of food hallowed as a sacrifice to the gods.

The story is romantic, but pregnant with importance. The events of that day had changed the history of the world, inasmuch, as the lad, Abdu'llah by name, whose life was thus spared, lived to become the father of the Prophet of Arabia.

After an interval of some years passed by Abdu'l Muttalib in consolidating his power and strengthening his position, the hand of time points to the memorable year, A.D. 570, when Mecca was invaded by the Abyssinian Viceroy of Yaman. That potentate had erected at Sana a magnificent cathedral, a circumstance which inflamed the hearts of the Arabs with angry feelings, as they considered it an attempt to divert the pilgrimage of their tribes to any other direction than that of the sacred precincts of Mecca ; so they assumed a hostile attitude and endeavoured to thwart the building of the objectionable edifice. The Viceroy, enraged in turn at this state of affairs, resolved to attack the "City of Cities," and raze its temple to the ground. Upon this enterprize he set out with a considerable army, in the train of which was led an elephant, a circumstance so singular and remarkable in the annals of Arabia, that the commander, his host, the invasion and the year are to this day linked in the memories of the people with the name of that mighty creature. A prince of the old Himyar stock, with an army of Arab adherents, was the first to oppose the advance of the Abyssinians. The venturous warrior was, however, defeated, though his life was spared, and he was permitted to follow the camp of the conqueror as a prisoner of war. A like result attended the efforts of a local chieftain, who, in the northern limits of Yaman, endeavoured to stop the progress of the invasion. Thence the elated Abyssinian proceeded to a spot but three days march from Mecca ; the inhabitants—possibly making discretion the better part of valour—sent to say

that they had no concern with the Kaba, to destroy which was the object of the warlike enterprize, and would willingly permit a guide to direct the Abyssinian army to the spot. For this purpose they sent a man named Abu Righal, but scarce had the treacherous miscreant proceeded a day's march than he sickened and died. Centuries afterwards the Meccans were wont to mark their abhorrence of the traitor by casting stones at his tomb as they passed. In spite of the misfortune which befel their guide, the Abyssinian troops continued their journey, carrying off what cattle they could secure, amongst the rest, some camels belonging to Abdu'l Muttalib, till they came at length to the outskirts of the city ; an embassy was then despatched to the inhabitants. "Abraha," so the message ran, "had no desire to do them injury. His only object was to demolish the Kaba—that performed, he would retire without shedding the blood of any."

The Meccans had already resolved that it would be vain to oppose the invader by force of arms, but the destruction of the Kaba they refused to allow upon any save compulsory terms. At last the embassy prevailed upon Abdu'l Muttalib and the chieftains of some of the other Meccan tribes to repair to the viceroy's camp, and there plead their cause. The visitors were treated with distinguished honour. To gain over the envoy the camels which had been plundered from him on the march, were restored by Abraha ; but the dusky warrior could obtain no answer such as to meet his wishes in regard to the Kaba. "Another is its master, who will surely defend it," was the oracular speech of the son of Hashim. The chiefs who accompanied the Quraish ruler, less confident in the miraculous protection thus promised, offered a third of the wealth of the region of Tihama if the Abyssinian Viceroy would desist from his designs against their temple. But he refused ; the negotiations were thereupon broken off, and the chieftains returned to Mecca. The people, by the advice of their head, now made preparations for retiring in a body

to the hills and defiles in the vicinity, on the day before the expected attack. As Abdu'l Muttalib leaned upon the ring of the door of the Kaba he is said to have prayed aloud in the following terms, to the Deity whom he had been taught to worship and venerate:—"Defend O Lord, thine own Home, and suffer not the cross to triumph over the Kaba!" He then relaxed his hold, and betaking himself with the rest of the people to the neighbouring heights, awaited the course of events.

Meanwhile a pestilential distemper had shewn itself in the camp of the Viceroy. It broke out with deadly pustules and frightful blains, and was probably an aggravated form of small-pox. In confusion and dismay the army commenced its retreat. Abandoned by their guides many perished among the valleys, while a flood (such is the pious legend) sent by the wrath of Heaven, swept off multitudes into the sea. Abraha himself, a mass of malignant and putrid sores, died in pain and misery on his return to his capital.

After the disastrous termination of the Expedition of the Elephant, Abdu'l Muttalib, then about seventy years of age, enjoyed the rank and consideration of the foremost chief of Mecca. A few months previous to this event he had taken his youngest son, Abdu'llah, a stripling of four-and-twenty summers, to the house of a distant kinsman, and there affianced him to a lady of the name of Amina. The bridegroom remained with his wife for three days, and then set out on a mercantile expedition to Syria. On his way back he sickened and died at Madina, leaving his young widow far advanced in pregnancy. So it happened that fifty-three days after the attack of Abraha—that is 20th August, A.D. 570—a hapless infant was born into the world, inheriting nought but five camels, a flock of goats, and the house in which his mother dwelt, to which heritage of wealth it may be perhaps fair to add the slave girl who tended the suckling. Abdu'l Muttalib on hearing the tidings, took the infant in his arms, and went to the Kaba, where, standing by the holy house, he gave

thanks to God. The child thus ushered into life with all the surroundings of poverty and humility, was Muhammad, destined in the fulness of time to become the Prophet of Arabia, at whose command countless thousands bent their knee in submissive obedience, while his memory still lives in the hearts of innumerable myriads of devotees, who worship as a God a being twelve centuries ago no more than a poor, feeble, portionless babe of the desert.

*Is not this akin to the Christians  
worship of Christ? Yes.*

## CHAPTER II.

## MUHAMMAD.

ACCORDING to the wont of the Arabs, the Infant Muhammad was made over to the charge of a slave woman: but after he had been suckled a few days, a party of wanderers from the desert arrived at Mecca with several women, who offered themselves as nurses for the infants of the city. Accordingly the child was placed in the hands of one of the matrons in question, by name Halima, and for five years he remained amongst the Bani Sad in the tents of his adopted parents. To this circumstance the Prophet of Arabia was indebted for the elegance of diction which contributed so much in after years towards the success of his mission. "Verily I am the most perfect Arab amongst you; my descent is from the Quraish, and my tongue is the tongue of the Bani Sad." Such was the boast of a man, conscious how much in his career was due to the beauty and sweetness of the language in which he clothed the thoughts, the expression of which gave life and vigour to the mission he proclaimed.

After remaining at Mecca for upwards of a year Muhammad was taken by his mother to Madina, but on the return home, after a sojourn of a month in the city, Amina, his mother, fell sick and died (A.D. 575). Whereupon the little orphan was carried back to his native city by his nurse Baraka, who handed him over to his grandfather, Abdu'l Muttalib, at that time a patriarch of fourscore years. "The child," says Sir

W. Muir, "was treated by him with singular fondness. A rug used to be spread under the shadow of the Kaba, and on it the aged chief reclined in shelter from the heat of the sun. Around the carpet, but at a respectful distance, sat his sons. The little Muhammad was wont to run close up to the Patriarch and unceremoniously take possession of his rug; his sons would seek to drive him off, but Abdu'l Muttalib would interpose, saying, 'Let my little son alone,' stroke him on the back, and delight to hear his childish prattle."

Thus passed an interval of two years, when the grandfather paid the debt of nature, having on his deathbed consigned the guardianship of his orphan grandchild to his son Abu Talib, who discharged his trust with most scrupulous care and diligence: indeed, he scarce ever allowed the lad to leave his side, and when he had occasion to undertake a mercantile journey to Syria, it needed but little persuasion on the part of the child, now twelve years old, to induce his benefactor to allow him to accompany the caravan.

The youth of Muhammad was spent amongst the hills and dales around Mecca, tending such sheep and goats as might from time to time be placed in his charge, the hire received being taken home to his uncle Abu Talib, whose slender resources stood in need of any assistance which the young shepherd could afford. But a change was at hand. Abu Talib determined that his nephew, who had reached his five-and-twentieth birthday, should seek a more extended sphere of action. "I am, as thou knowest, a man of small substance, and truly the times deal hardly with me." Such was the noble but impoverished Quraishite's language. "Now here is a caravan of thine own tribe about to start for Syria, and Khadija, daughter of Quwailid, needeth men of our tribe to send forth with her merchandize. If thou wert to offer thyself she would readily accept thy services." So it happened that Muhammad betook himself to Syria, where he acquitted himself with sagacity and prudence. On his

return he recounted to Khadija the tale of his doings, and the handsome widow, struck by the noble features and comely form of the young man before her, formed the resolution that her agent should, if thus it should chance, fill the more dignified portion of husband. It may well be imagined that the young man was nothing loth. Khadija was distinguished alike by birth and fortune, in that her father Quwailid was a direct and near descendant of the famous Qussai, while the considerable substance which she inherited by her former marriages had been increased by mercantile speculation. Added to this, she was handsome and fair to behold. But how could she expect her father to consent to the marriage. She, a matron whose hand had been sought by many a noble suitor from amongst the chiefs of the Quraish, while Muhammad was but poor and humble, with no pretensions and no prospects. The difficulty was, however, speedily overcome. The ready-witted widow prepared a feast at which she induced her father to partake somewhat freely of the good cheer provided for him. When matters were ripe, she artfully introduced the object of her adoration, and induced the old man to unite him in marriage with herself in the presence of a witness. Awakening to clearer consciousness the fond father was surprised to find himself surrounded by tokens of a nuptial feast. Still greater was his astonishment when he learned what had happened, and that he had given his consent to a match of which he did not approve.

This union proved the turning-point in Muhammad's career, as it not only removed from his path the necessity of living by the sweat of his brow, but afforded him time and opportunity to reflect upon, and bring into play those spiritual longings which for years had agitated his bosom. It was also emphatically a happy marriage, while, in spite of Khadija's somewhat mature age, no less than six children in due course gladdened the abode of the future Lawgiver of Arabia. The eldest offspring was a son, by name Kasim, then followed four



daughters in succession, Zainab, Rukayya, Fatima, and Umm Kalsum ; last of all was born his second son, Abdullah.

For a considerable period the tenour of Muhammad's life was smooth and uneventful, but when he was about five-and-thirty years old an incident occurred in his career, foreshadowing that marvellous power of turning to account the ordinary circumstances of life, which, in after times, gave him a command over the hearts of men such as has never been surpassed, rarely indeed equalled in the history of mankind. In A.D. 605, it had happened that a violent storm sweeping down the valley of Mecca, hurled destruction upon the sacred temple ; while to add to the evil, the edifice being roofless, a band of robbers clambered over the walls and carried off some of the relics. Though these latter were recovered, it was resolved that measures should be taken to avoid similar dangers in the future ; accordingly the Quraish, dividing themselves into four bodies, commenced to heighten the walls, of which one was assigned to each of the four sections of the tribe. In spite of the sacrilege of dismantling the holy fabric, so sacred in the eyes of a pious Arab, the work proceeded without interruption, until it became necessary to place the venerated "Black Stone" (to be hereafter described) in such a position in the Eastern Corner, that it could readily be kissed by the votaries who annually repaired to the temple. The honour of handling this most revered of relics was so great that each family of the Quraish advanced an exclusive pretension to the coveted privilege. The strife waxed warm, and the danger of bloodshed became imminent. It so happened that Muhammad one day chanced to pass through the midst, at a time when the various aspirants, unable to arrange their quarrel, had argued that the first person who entered by a certain gate of the city should be arbitrator in the matter ; it thus fell to the lot of "Al Amin" (the faithful) as he was known amongst his kinsfolk, to decide

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The hero of this episode was now approaching his fortieth year.

"Always pensive," again we quote the eloquent words of Sir William Muir, "he had of late become even more thoughtful and retiring. Contemplation and reflection now engaged his whole mind. The debasement of his people, his own uncertainty as to the true religion, the dim and imperfect shadows of Judaism and Christianity exciting doubts without satisfying them, pressed heavily upon his soul, and he frequently retired to seek relief in meditation amongst the solitary valleys and rocks near Mecca. His favourite spot was a cave in the declivities at the foot of Mount Hira, a lofty conical hill, two or three miles north of Mecca. Thither he would retire for some days at a time, and his faithful wife sometimes accompanied him. The continued solitude, instead of stilling his anxiety, magnified into sterner and more impressive shapes the solemn realities which perplexed and agitated his soul. . . . All around was bleak and rugged. . . . There was harmony between these desert scenes of external nature and the troubled, chaotic elements of the spiritual world within. By degrees his impulsive and susceptible mind was wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement; and he would give vent to his agitation in wild and rhapsodical language, the counterpart of his inward struggles after truth."

It may readily be supposed that the careless and indifferent denizens of the desert received, as the

source the pilgrims were henceforth supplied, and the liquid stream soon began to share in the sacredness attaching to the Kaba. The fame and influence of Abdu'l Muttalib rapidly commenced to become greater and greater, and a large family of sons, born to him in later years, added to the estimation in which he was held. For a lengthened period, it is true, he had but one son; feeling so strongly his weakness and inferiority in contending with the large and influential families of those who, in his early career, opposed and thwarted him, he vowed a vow that if destiny should ever grant him ten sons, he would devote one of them as a sacrifice to the Fates. Years rolled on, and the rash father at last found himself surrounded by the fatal number in question, the sight of whom, daily reminded him of his pledge. But the oath was sacred and could not be disregarded; bidding his sons accompany him to the Kaba, each was made to write his name upon a lot, which done, the whole of these were made over to the Intendant of the Temple, who cast them in the usual manner. The fatal arrow fell upon the youngest and best beloved of all Abdu'l Muttalib's sons. The father was inconsolable, but the vow devoting him to the gods, must needs be kept, and the sacrifice be made ready. His daughters wept and clung around the fond parent, who was willingly persuaded to cast lots between the lad and ten camels, the current fine for the blood of a man. If the Deity should accept the ransom, there need be no scruple in sparing the son. But the lot a second time fell upon the hapless youth. Again, and with the same result, it was cast between him and twenty camels. At each successive trial Abdu'l Muttalib added ten camels to the stake, but Fortune was inexorable. It was now the tenth throw, and the ransom had reached a hundred camels, when the lot at last fell upon the unfortunate animals. The father joyfully released the young man from his impending fate, and taking the creatures slaughtered them as food for the inhabitants of Mecca, the residue

being left to the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, for the family of Abdu'l Muttalib refused to taste of food hallowed as a sacrifice to the gods.

The story is romantic, but pregnant with importance. The events of that day had changed the history of the world, inasmuch, as the lad, Abdu'llah by name, whose life was thus spared, lived to become the father of the Prophet of Arabia.

After an interval of some years passed by Abdu'l Muttalib in consolidating his power and strengthening his position, the hand of time points to the memorable year, A.D. 570, when Mecca was invaded by the Abyssinian Viceroy of Yaman. That potentate had erected at Sana a magnificent cathedral, a circumstance which inflamed the hearts of the Arabs with angry feelings, as they considered it an attempt to divert the pilgrimage of their tribes to any other direction than that of the sacred precincts of Mecca ; so they assumed a hostile attitude and endeavoured to thwart the building of the objectionable edifice. The Viceroy, enraged in turn at this state of affairs, resolved to attack the "City of Cities," and raze its temple to the ground. Upon this enterprize he set out with a considerable army, in the train of which was led an elephant, a circumstance so singular and remarkable in the annals of Arabia, that the commander, his host, the invasion and the year are to this day linked in the memories of the people with the name of that mighty creature. A prince of the old Himyar stock, with an army of Arab adherents, was the first to oppose the advance of the Abyssinians. The venturous warrior was, however, defeated, though his life was spared, and he was permitted to follow the camp of the conqueror as a prisoner of war. A like result attended the efforts of a local chieftain, who, in the northern limits of Yaman, endeavoured to stop the progress of the invasion. Thence the elated Abyssinian proceeded to a spot but three days march from Mecca ; the inhabitants—possibly making discretion the better part of valour—sent to say

that they had no concern with the Kaba, to destroy which was the object of the warlike enterprize, and would willingly permit a guide to direct the Abyssinian army to the spot. For this purpose they sent a man named Abu Righal, but scarce had the treacherous miscreant proceeded a day's march than he sickened and died. Centuries afterwards the Meccans were wont to mark their abhorrence of the traitor by casting stones at his tomb as they passed. In spite of the misfortune which befel their guide, the Abyssinian troops continued their journey, carrying off what cattle they could secure, amongst the rest, some camels belonging to Abdu'l Muttalib, till they came at length to the outskirts of the city; an embassy was then despatched to the inhabitants. "Abraha," so the message ran, "had no desire to do them injury. His only object was to demolish the Kaba—that performed, he would retire without shedding the blood of any."

The Meccans had already resolved that it would be vain to oppose the invader by force of arms, but the destruction of the Kaba they refused to allow upon any save compulsory terms. At last the embassy prevailed upon Abdu'l Muttalib and the chieftains of some of the other Meccan tribes to repair to the viceroy's camp, and there plead their cause. The visitors were treated with distinguished honour. To gain over the envoy the camels which had been plundered from him on the march, were restored by Abraha; but the dusky warrior could obtain no answer such as to meet his wishes in regard to the Kaba. "Another is its master, who will surely defend it," was the oracular speech of the son of Hashim. The chiefs who accompanied the Quraish ruler, less confident in the miraculous protection thus promised, offered a third of the wealth of the region of Tihama if the Abyssinian Viceroy would desist from his designs against their temple. But he refused; the negotiations were thereupon broken off, and the chieftains returned to Mecca. The people, by the advice of their head, now made preparations for retiring in a body

to the hills and defiles in the vicinity, on the day before the expected attack. As Abdu'l Muttalib leaned upon the ring of the door of the Kaba he is said to have prayed aloud in the following terms, to the Deity whom he had been taught to worship and venerate:—"Defend O Lord, thine own Home, and suffer not the cross to triumph over the Kaba!" He then relaxed his hold, and betaking himself with the rest of the people to the neighbouring heights, awaited the course of events.

Meanwhile a pestilential distemper had shewn itself in the camp of the Viceroy. It broke out with deadly pustules and frightful blains, and was probably an aggravated form of small-pox. In confusion and dismay the army commenced its retreat. Abandoned by their guides many perished among the valleys, while a flood (such is the pious legend) sent by the wrath of Heaven, swept off multitudes into the sea. Abraha himself, a mass of malignant and putrid sores, died in pain and misery on his return to his capital.

After the disastrous termination of the Expedition of the Elephant, Abdu'l Muttalib, then about seventy years of age, enjoyed the rank and consideration of the foremost chief of Mecca. A few months previous to this event he had taken his youngest son, Abdu'llah, a stripling of four-and-twenty summers, to the house of a distant kinsman, and there affianced him to a lady of the name of Amina. The bridegroom remained with his wife for three days, and then set out on a mercantile expedition to Syria. On his way back he sickened and died at Madina, leaving his young widow far advanced in pregnancy. So it happened that fifty-three days after the attack of Abraha—that is 20th August, A.D. 570—a hapless infant was born into the world, inheriting nought but five camels, a flock of goats, and the house in which his mother dwelt, to which heritage of wealth it may be perhaps fair to add the slave girl who tended the suckling. Abdu'l Muttalib on hearing the tidings, took the infant in his arms, and went to the Kaba, where, standing by the holy house, he gave

thanks to God. The child thus ushered into life with all the surroundings of poverty and humility, was Muhammad, destined in the fulness of time to become the Prophet of Arabia, at whose command countless thousands bent their knee in submissive obedience, while his memory still lives in the hearts of innumerable myriads of devotees, who worship as a God a being twelve centuries ago no more than a poor, feeble, portionless babe of the desert.

*Is not this akin to the Christians  
worship of Christ? Yes.*

## CHAPTER II.

## MUHAMMAD.

ACCORDING to the wont of the Arabs, the Infant Muhammad was made over to the charge of a slave woman: but after he had been suckled a few days, a party of wanderers from the desert arrived at Mecca with several women, who offered themselves as nurses for the infants of the city. Accordingly the child was placed in the hands of one of the matrons in question, by name Halima, and for five years he remained amongst the Bani Sad in the tents of his adopted parents. To this circumstance the Prophet of Arabia was indebted for the elegance of diction which contributed so much in after years towards the success of his mission. "Verily I am the most perfect Arab amongst you; my descent is from the Quraish, and my tongue is the tongue of the Bani Sad." Such was the boast of a man, conscious how much in his career was due to the beauty and sweetness of the language in which he clothed the thoughts, the expression of which gave life and vigour to the mission he proclaimed.

After remaining at Mecca for upwards of a year Muhammad was taken by his mother to Madina, but on the return home, after a sojourn of a month in the city, Amina, his mother, fell sick and died (A.D. 575). Whereupon the little orphan was carried back to his native city by his nurse Baraka, who handed him over to his grandfather, Abdu'l Muttalib, at that time a patriarch of fourscore years. "The child," says Sir



W. Muir, "was treated by him with singular fondness. A rug used to be spread under the shadow of the Kaba, and on it the aged chief reclined in shelter from the heat of the sun. Around the carpet, but at a respectful distance, sat his sons. The little Muhammad was wont to run close up to the Patriarch and unceremoniously take possession of his rug; his sons would seek to drive him off, but Abdu'l Muttalib would interpose, saying, 'Let my little son alone,' stroke him on the back, and delight to hear his childish prattle."

Thus passed an interval of two years, when the grandfather paid the debt of nature, having on his deathbed consigned the guardianship of his orphan grandchild to his son Abu Talib, who discharged his trust with most scrupulous care and diligence: indeed, he scarce ever allowed the lad to leave his side, and when he had occasion to undertake a mercantile journey to Syria, it needed but little persuasion on the part of the child, now twelve years old, to induce his benefactor to allow him to accompany the caravan.

The youth of Muhammad was spent amongst the hills and dales around Mecca, tending such sheep and goats as might from time to time be placed in his charge, the hire received being taken home to his uncle Abu Talib, whose slender resources stood in need of any assistance which the young shepherd could afford. But a change was at hand. Abu Talib determined that his nephew, who had reached his five-and-twentieth birthday, should seek a more extended sphere of action. "I am, as thou knowest, a man of small substance, and truly the times deal hardly with me." Such was the noble but impoverished Quraishite's language. "Now here is a caravan of thine own tribe about to start for Syria, and Khadija, daughter of Quwailid, needeth men of our tribe to send forth with her merchandize. If thou wert to offer thyself she would readily accept thy services." So it happened that Muhammad betook himself to Syria, where he acquitted himself with sagacity and prudence. On his

return he recounted to Khadija the tale of his doings, and the handsome widow, struck by the noble features and comely form of the young man before her, formed the resolution that her agent should, if thus it should chance, fill the more dignified portion of husband. It may well be imagined that the young man was nothing loth. Khadija was distinguished alike by birth and fortune, in that her father Quwailid was a direct and near descendant of the famous Qussai, while the considerable substance which she inherited by her former marriages had been increased by mercantile speculation. Added to this, she was handsome and fair to behold. But how could she expect her father to consent to the marriage. She, a matron whose hand had been sought by many a noble suitor from amongst the chiefs of the Quraish, while Muhammad was but poor and humble, with no pretensions and no prospects. The difficulty was, however, speedily overcome. The ready-witted widow prepared a feast at which she induced her father to partake somewhat freely of the good cheer provided for him. When matters were ripe, she artfully introduced the object of her adoration, and induced the old man to unite him in marriage with herself in the presence of a witness. Awakening to clearer consciousness the fond father was surprised to find himself surrounded by tokens of a nuptial feast. Still greater was his astonishment when he learned what had happened, and that he had given his consent to a match of which he did not approve.

This union proved the turning-point in Muhammad's career, as it not only removed from his path the necessity of living by the sweat of his brow, but afforded him time and opportunity to reflect upon, and bring into play those spiritual longings which for years had agitated his bosom. It was also emphatically a happy marriage, while, in spite of Khadija's somewhat mature age, no less than six children in due course gladdened the abode of the future Lawgiver of Arabia. The eldest offspring was a son, by name Kasim, then followed four

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The hero of this episode was now approaching his fortieth year.

"Always pensive," again we quote the eloquent words of Sir William Muir, "he had of late become even more thoughtful and retiring. Contemplation and reflection now engaged his whole mind. The debasement of his people, his own uncertainty as to the true religion, the dim and imperfect shadows of Judaism and Christianity exciting doubts without satisfying them, pressed heavily upon his soul, and he frequently retired to seek relief in meditation amongst the solitary valleys and rocks near Mecca. His favourite spot was a cave in the declivities at the foot of Mount Hira, a lofty conical hill, two or three miles north of Mecca. Thither he would retire for some days at a time, and his faithful wife sometimes accompanied him. The continued solitude, instead of stilling his anxiety, magnified into sterner and more impressive shapes the solemn realities which perplexed and agitated his soul. . . . All around was bleak and rugged. . . . There was harmony between these desert scenes of external nature and the troubled, chaotic elements of the spiritual world within. By degrees his impulsive and susceptible mind was wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement; and he would give vent to his agitation in wild and rhapsodical language, the counterpart of his inward struggles after truth."

It may readily be supposed that the careless and indifferent denizens of the desert received, as the

day-dreams of a half-witted enthusiast the warnings and expostulations which Muhammad now began to utter ; yet a few regarded his sayings with attention if not with reverence ; but even these latter argued that they had better be content with the light their Maker had given them. " If," said they, " a Prophet had been sent unto us, we should, no doubt, have followed his directions, and been equally devout and spiritual in our worship as the Jews and Christians." Though surrounded by a small band of adherents who recognized him as their spiritual head, Muhammad saw clearly that he would be powerless unless charged with a " Divine commission " to call forth his people from darkness into light. Distracted in mind and soul, he betook himself to the desert, where under the canopy of the skies, he struggled with a destiny fraught, in his case, with such difficulties and anxieties. But while he meditated on these things a heavenly visitant appeared before his astonished eyes, charged with the " memorable behest " \*—

Recite in the name of the Lord who created :—  
 Created Man from nought but congealed blood :—  
 Recite ! For thy Lord is beneficent.  
 It is He who hath taught (to record Revelation) with the Pen ;—  
 Hath taught Man that which he knoweth not.  
 Nay, verily Man is rebellious ;  
 Because he seeth himself to abound in Wealth.  
 Verily unto thy Lord is the return of all.  
 Hast thou seen him that holdeth back  
 The servant (of God) when he prayeth ?  
 What thinkest thou ? had he listened to right Direction,  
 And commanded unto Piety ?  
 Dost thou not see that he hath rejected the Truth, and turned his  
 back ;  
 What ! Doth he not know that God seeth ?  
 Nay, verily, if he forbear not, We shall drag him by the Forelock—  
 The lying, sinful Forelock !  
 Then let him call his company of friends, and We shall call the  
 guards of Hell ;  
 Nay ! submit not unto him ; but worship, and draw nigh unto the  
 Lord.

\* Quran, Sura 96.

Muhammad had now (A.D. 609-10) become the servant of God, the Prophet of the Most High, but his "Mission" was unheeded; the busy world had no mind to listen to the rhapsodies of a religious enthusiast. Weary in mind, and his soul filled with despair, the idea seized his frenzied brain, that to end an existence so painful and full of perplexities, he would rush headlong over one of the wild cliffs where he was wont to repair to cool his thoughts and collect his ideas. But his better judgment prevailed, and the fatal resolution was cast aside. An invisible influence held him back! Nor did he pass unrewarded; again for the second time an angel from heaven came down from the skies with comfort and support for the struggling and tortured son of Adam, and, falling into a trance, he received the command to "Arise and preach."

Slowly and surely did the twice consecrated "Mission" of Muhammad gain ground. In the forty-fourth year of his age we find him surrounded by a knot of adherents, all of whom looked up to him as their divinely-appointed guide.

The first convert to his doctrines is supposed to have been the faithful wife of his bosom, though certain sectaries would have it believed otherwise. "So Khadija believed," thus is it recorded in the annals of Islam, "and attested the truth of that which came from God. Thus was the Lord minded to lighten the burden of his Prophet, for he heard nothing that grieved him touching his rejection by his people, but he had recourse unto her, and she comforted, re-assured, and supported him." Her example was followed by Zaid, the husband of Baraka, the nurse of Muhammad; while his father's brother's son, the lad Ali, who lived under the same roof with the Prophet, had grown up from a child in the faith of his distinguished guardian and protector. To this small group—the first germs of the Muslim faith—must be added the name of Abu Bakr, the bosom friend of the new apostle—a convert who, as possessing both wealth and influence, secured for the recently proclaimed creed an amount of consideration

and respect which it could scarcely have otherwise obtained. Within a period of between three or four years after Muhammad had assumed the rôle of a Prophet, the converts to his preaching amounted to upwards of forty souls, including amongst the number the well-known Othman, who, together with the afore-



THE MUZZIN.

mentioned Ali, succeeded in the fulness of time to the position held by the founder of the faith; nor must mention be omitted of the famous Bilal, the son of an Abyssinian slave-girl, shortly and for future ages to be renowned throughout the Muhammadan world as the first "Muazzin," or "Crier to Prayer."

It was not to be expected that the citizens of Mecca would regard with much favour the man who was wont "to speak unto the people about the heavens." The religion of their ancestors might be wrong, but what evidence had *they* that the "Divine commission" of the Prophet who had sprung up in their midst was aught but a device to secure to himself the obedience and support of his credulous brethren? When, however, Muhammad began to abuse their idols, and to proclaim that all who trusted in such blocks of wood and stone would be consigned to the bottomless pit, "they became displeased, and began to treat him with contumely." Yet at this time, as indeed in all ages, persecution failed in its object, while, on the other hand, it afforded a plausible excuse for opposing force to force against those who "obstructed the ways of the Lord"; and so it happened that a contention arose, and "the first blood was shed in Islam."

Y In the fourth year of his Mission (A.D. 614), Muhammad removed to the house of a convert named Arqam, with the view of more peaceably expounding his new creed to those who were prepared to give him ear. Aggravated by the success of the sect which had sprung up, the Quraish commenced to ill-treat such of the humbler converts as came within the pale of their vengeance, and the wretched beings whom they seized were exposed "in the glare of the mid-day sun, upon the scorching gravel of the Meccan valley," till anguish induced them to revile their Prophet and acknowledge the idols of their kinsfolk and fellow-countrymen. Unable to protect these sufferers for the faith, Muhammad enjoined them to seek in a foreign land that security which was denied them in their own kingdom. "Yonder," said he, pointing to the West, "lieth a region wherein no one is wronged—a land of righteousness. Depart thither, and there remain till it pleaseth the Lord to open your way before you." So in the fifth year of the Prophet's ministry (Nov. A.D. 615), a party of fifteen souls embarked in haste for Abyssinia.



"On this occasion," says Sir W. Muir, "the emigrants were few, but the part they acted was of deep importance in the history of Islam. It convinced the Meccans of the sincerity and resolution of the converts, and proved their readiness to undergo any loss and any hardship rather than abjure the faith of Muhammad; a bright example of self-denial was exhibited to the believers generally, who were led to regard peril and exile in the cause of God as a glorious privilege and distinction. It suggested that the hostile attitude of their fellow-citizens, together with the purity of their own faith, might secure for them within the limits of Arabia itself a sympathy and hospitality as cordial as that afforded by the Abyssinians; and thus it gave birth to the idea of a greater Hijra—the emigration to Madina."

At this time the "Apostle of the Lord" — such was the title which he had assumed—broken in spirit, when he reflected on the small progress made in converting his fellow-countrymen, conceived the idea of effecting a compromise with his opponents; so one day, entering a group of Meccans who were assembled in the Kaba, he recited to them a revelation which contained an acknowledgment of the idols of Arabia. The Quraish, surprised and delighted at this recognition of their deities, prostrated themselves with one accord on the ground. With the rapidity of the wind, the rumour spread throughout the city that they had been converted, and in a brief time the welcome news was wafted to the far-off shores of Abyssinia. Encouraged by the glad tidings, the little band of refugees who had settled therein at once determined to revisit the land of their birth, where, under the altered condition of affairs, they felt sure of a warm and hospitable reception. So, three months after they had shaken off the dust of their feet against Mecca, they once again reappeared at the gates of the sacred city. But much had happened during the eventful weeks in which they had journeyed along with joyous hearts and eager expectations. Muhammad had made a compromise with his opponents, but he quickly perceived that his

policy of concession had not stood him in good stead : the worship of images continued, while the God of Islam remained unhonoured and unheeded. The dilemma was perplexing, but his resolve was firm and unhesitating ; he denounced his own actions, and proclaimed that "the devil had deceived him." Ever at hand to comfort and console the dejected Apostle of the Lord, an angel now came down from heaven, but his mission was, on this occasion, prefaced by the stern rebuke, "What is this that thou hast done ? thou hast repeated before the people words that I never gave unto thee." So the terrified penitent was led to cancel the verse which had brought down upon him the wrath of his Maker, and to substitute another, proclaiming the idols of Arabia as "naught but names." But the circumstance that Muhammad had temporized with idolatry seriously undermined his position at Mecca—his explanation was laughed to scorn, and persecution waxed hotter and more severe than ever. So the new comers from Abyssinia, on their arrival, finding matters even worse than when they quitted the city some months before, were compelled to retrace their weary steps, and for the second time they turned their backs upon their brethren. Their number, too, was further augmented, and on their return amounted to the not inconsiderable total of 101 souls, of whom 83 were men.

Muhammad himself remained behind, but he was exposed to insults of every description at the hands of the incensed populace, who were wont to pelt him in the streets ; and now and again the Prophet, who in after years numbered his followers by millions of pious Muslims, was compelled to crouch under the ledge of projecting stones, there to offer up to Heaven his prayers to the God in whom he trusted ! Strange and mysterious indeed are the workings of Providence !

In the sixth year of his Mission Muhammad was fortunate enough to secure the adhesion to his cause of two citizens of position, by name Hamza and Omar. Encouraged by this circumstance, the Prophet of Arabia,

abandoning the quiet seclusion of the "House of Islam"—for thus was called his humble abode at Mecca—betook himself with his followers to the Kaba, where before all the assembled multitudes the worship of the One God was thenceforth to be performed. Islam was no longer now a down-trodden, despised faith, held by a few isolated and, for the most part, obscure converts; but a powerful faction, which challenged open hostility with those who worshipped the gods of Arabia, the idols of wood and stone. In these circumstances the Quraish bethought themselves of an expedient to reduce to submission their rivals, and the Hashimite tribe by whom the latter were supported. They entered into a solemn bond, which they impressed with their seals and hung up in the temple, to the effect that "they would not marry their women, nor give their own in marriage to them; that they would sell nothing to them, nor buy aught from them; that dealings with them of every kind should cease." Unable to resist the attacks thus made upon them, the Prophet and his followers retired (A.D. 616-617) into a secluded quarter of the city, where they soon found themselves deprived even of the barest necessities of life—the ban of the Quraish had taken fatal effect. For three years the well-nigh famished converts, in company with their wives and little ones, maintained the struggle; but the piteous cries and emaciated features of the hapless children indicated in unmistakable language how great were the hardships which the believers in the new faith had to undergo.

Fortunately a time of delivery was at hand. While the sympathies of the Quraish were aroused at the exemplary conduct of Muhammad under these trying circumstances, it was discovered that the parchment in the Kaba, on which the ban was engraved, had been eaten by insects. Encouraged by this intelligence, the venerable Abu Talib, bent down as he was with the weight of more than fourscore years, proceeded with a troop of followers, and addressed the assembled tribe

in these stirring words :—" Intelligence hath reached me that your parchment hath been eaten up of insects. If my words be found true, then desist from your evil designs ; if false, I will deliver up Muhammad that ye may do with him as ye list." The proposal found acceptance—the document was fetched from the Kaba, and, true enough, the greater portion thereof had been devoured by white ants, and was no longer legible. Abu Talib thereupon bitterly upbraided them for their inhumanity, and portrayed in forcible terms their breach of social kindness. So the refugees were allowed to go forth to their respective homes. Scarce had he time to rejoice over his success, ere the cup of joy was once again dashed from the lips of the exultant Prophet. Khadija, for five-and-twenty years the wife of his bosom, was at this period (Dec. A.D. 619) taken from him, and barely, too, had he begun to realize how great was his loss, when Abu Talib, who for forty years had nurtured and protected him, was gathered to his fathers. But it was an occasion for action rather than grief—something must be done—seeing that the new faith had not materially gained ground at Mecca during the last three or four years. So Muhammad determined to visit the neighbouring city of Tayif, in the hope that the people might be induced to give ear to his message. With this resolve, unaccompanied save by his faithful attendant Zaid, he set out on his adventurous mission, struggling through rocky defiles for forty weary miles, till he reached the fertile valleys which surrounded the city whither he was bending his steps. But he preached to heedless listeners ; the chiefs received him with cold disdain, while the populace, contrasting the poverty of the man with the richness of his mission, regarded him with contempt, and, pelting him with stones, drove him forth from the town. Wearied and lacerated, the Prophet of Arabia took refuge in an orchard ; but some wealthy Meccans, sitting in their pleasure gardens near Tayif, had watched the flight of Muhammad, and, moved by compassion at his sorry condition, they sent a tray

of grapes to refresh his parched lips. Somewhat relieved, he betook himself to prayer, and, falling down on his knees, poured forth a touching appeal to the Lord whom he worshipped. "O Lord! I make my complaint unto Thee of the feebleness of my strength and the poverty of my expedients, and of my insignificance before mankind. O Thou Most Merciful! Thou art the Lord of the weak, and Thou art my Lord. Into whose hands wilt Thou abandon me? Into the hands of the strangers that beset me round, or of the enemy to whom Thou hast given the mastery over me? If *Thy* wrath be not upon me I have no concern, but rather Thy favour is the more wide unto me. I seek refuge in the light of Thy gracious countenance, by which the darkness is dispersed, and peace ariseth both for this world and the next, that Thy wrath light not upon me, nor Thine indignation. It is Thine to show anger until Thou art pleased, and there is not any power or resource but in Thee."

7 Repulsed from Tayif, and hopeless of succeeding in Mecca, the Apostle sought in the domestic circle a solace for the disappointments and vexations which attended his public career. So he took to himself a wife (A.D. 620), one Sauda, a widow, while he betrothed himself to the daughter of Abu Bakr, by name Ayisha, then a child of about six or seven years of age.

Fortune seemed at this period of his career altogether to have deserted him; but a change was at hand. The season of pilgrimage had arrived. Muhammad, as usual, wandered forth to proclaim the faith of Islam to such as would listen to his words: it chanced that he perceived a knot of six or seven persons, and, recognizing them as strangers from Madina, he addressed them in kindly tones: ultimately, finding that they gave ear with readiness to his words, he expounded to them his doctrine, and, pointing out the difficulties of his position at Mecca, inquired whether they would receive and protect him in *their* city. While ready to embrace the Muslim faith, they were unable to pledge themselves

to comply with the wishes of the Prophet in regard to his migration to Madina—a matter which concerned others as well as themselves—but they promised to return at the season of pilgrimage in the ensuing year to the same spot whereon they stood. Months of anxious expectation passed by, till at length the appointed time came round. Conscious how much depended on the issue, Muhammad repaired with anxious steps and beating heart to the spot which he had named, a sheltered glen in Mina. But his apprehensions were soon dispelled, for, true to their word, he found there a band of twelve faithful followers from amongst the people of Madina, ready to acknowledge him as their spiritual pastor and master: so they plighted their faith: “We will not worship any but the one God; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery or kill our children; we will not slander in anywise; and we will not disobey the Prophet in anything that is right.” Muhammad replied, “If ye fulfil the pledge, Paradise shall be your reward. He that shall fail in any part thereof, to God belongeth his concern, either to punish or forgive.” This memorable proceeding, fraught with such vital consequences to the future of Islam, is known as the First Pledge of Aqaba, being named after the spot whither the band had retired to avoid observation. It happened in April, A.D. 621.

On returning to Madina, the disciples of the new faith found favour in the eyes of the people, converts flocked in with astonishing rapidity, and ere long it became necessary that a teacher well versed in the doctrines of God’s Apostle should repair to the town, now rapidly becoming a centre of the Muslim world. Thus it happened that a youth, by name Musab, was deputed for the purpose.

“The hopes of Muhammad,” says Sir W. Muir, “were now fixed upon Madina. Visions of his journey northwards flitted before his imagination. The musings of the day reappeared in midnight slumber. He dreamed that he was swiftly carried by Gabriel on a winged steed past Madina to the temple at

Jerusalem, where he was welcomed by the former Prophets, all assembled for his reception in solemn conclave. His excited spirit conjured up a still more transcendent scene. From Jerusalem he seemed to mount upwards and ascend from one heaven to another ; he found himself at last in the awful presence of his Maker, who dismissed him with the behest that his people were to pray five times in the day. As he awoke in the morning in the house of Abu Talib, where he had passed the night, the vision was vividly before his eyes, and he exclaimed to Umm Hani, the daughter of Abu Talib, that during the night he had prayed in the Temple of Jerusalem. While he was going forth to tell the vision to others, she seized him by the mantle, and conjured him not thus to expose himself to the mockery and revilings of the unbelievers. But he persisted. As the story spread abroad the idolaters scoffed, the believers were staggered, and some are said even to have gone back."

Another year elapsed, and for the second time (A.D. 622) the Madina converts repaired to Mecca ; on this occasion, however, they assembled to the goodly number of seventy-five. To elude the vigilance of the watchful and bigoted citizens, it was determined that the meeting with the Prophet should take place at night at a secluded glen beneath the famous eminence Aqaba. It was a romantic and striking scene. Thither the votaries repaired by twos and threes, to hear the address of their new leader. This finished, the "Seventy" proclaimed with one voice their readiness to receive the Prophet in their city, even at the risk of life and property. So they one and all swore the oath of fealty :—thus came about the second pledge of Aqaba. The Madina people now commenced their homeward journey ; but rumours of what had happened reached the tents of the Quraish, who, amazed and exasperated, followed in the footsteps of the departed caravans ; but in vain—they secured but one solitary captive. Still further irritated and incensed, they began to persecute both Muhammad and his followers ; whereupon the Prophet gave the command, "Depart unto Madina, for the Lord hath verily given you brethren in that city,

and a home in which ye may find refuge." This latter town is distant from Mecca upwards of 250 miles, the journey being usually accomplished in from ten to eleven days: but the Muslim wanderers were compelled to travel secretly in parties of two or three, and about two months elapsed before all the followers of the Prophet had reached their new abode. At last there remained but three believers in Mecca—Muhammad and Abu Bakr, together with their families, and lastly, Ali, now a stripling of about twenty summers. When all the preparations were complete, hearing that the Quraish were about to send a deputation to his house, and fearing that their intentions were evil, the Lawgiver of Arabia stole away secretly and unobserved from his abode: before starting, however, he cast his red Hadhrant mantle round the youthful Ali, and bid the lad occupy the bed he had himself just vacated. He then went to the house of Abu Bakr, and tarrying there till the shades of evening, they both escaped, unobserved, through a back window, and journeying south instead of north to avoid detection, took refuge in a cave in the mountain of Thaur. The disappearance of Muhammad occasioned no small stir in the city, and the chief of the Quraish went to the Prophet's house to gain tidings of the flight. Finding Ali the sole occupant of the abode, he questioned the youth as to what had occurred. "I have no knowledge of him," was the rejoinder; "am I his keeper? Ye bade him to quit the city, and he hath quitted it." Inquiry at the residence of Abu Bakr produced no more satisfactory results: so the tribe sent emissaries in all directions to discover if possible traces of the fugitives—but without success: the simple expedient of journeying in a direction diametrically opposite to the destination which it might be supposed they would have taken had saved the faith of Islam! Some, indeed, of the scouts came to the cave where the Prophet and his companions were concealed, but finding a spider's web spun across the entrance, they imagined the place deserted, and omitted to search for the fugi-



tives. One tiny insect, to use the expressive language of the historian of Rome, "had changed the history of the world."

After remaining three nights in the cave, preparations were made to start on their journey, and on the following evening the two camels which had borne them to their retreat, being ready, Muhammad and a guide mounted the swifter of the two, named Al Qaswa, while Abu Bakr, accompanied by his servant Amir ibn Fahaira, who had now joined his master, rode the second beast. The morn of flight, so memorable in the annals of Arabia, was June 20, A.D. 622; a date from which henceforth the chronology of the Muhammadan world was to be computed. The first "Hijra" year of the Eastern world had now commenced. Fatigued and weary, the fugitives plodded along, resting awhile during the hottest part of the day. After several hours had elapsed, they came to the encampment of some Bedouins of the desert, and seeing an Arab lady sitting in the front of her tent offering food and drink to such travelers as might pass her hospitable doors, the party refreshed themselves with a draught of milk. Hurrying on, they then turned into the common road which connects the cities of Mecca and Madina. They had not proceeded far when they perceived a scout who had been sent to track their footsteps; but the man was single-handed, while they themselves numbered four individuals. So they feared not; rather, indeed, they extracted from the venturesome wanderer a promise that if they allowed him "to depart in peace, he would not reveal that he had met them." With anxious hearts and worn-out frames, onward they toiled, till at length on the memorable Monday, the 28th of June, A.D., 622, they arrived safe and secure from the molestations of their enemies, amidst the congratulations of their friends, at the outskirts of Madina, a city henceforth destined to share with Mecca the love and reverence of all faithful Muslims. The stripling Ali, remained three days at the capital, and meeting with no interference or

annoyance, leisurely set out, when a fitting opportunity arose, towards the new home of his adoption. As regards the families of Muhammad and Abu Bakr, some of the members betook themselves at once to Madina, while others continued to abide at Mecca, where they do not appear to have met with either insult or molestation.

When the news spread through the town persons rushed forth in every direction, vying "with one another in showing honour to their visitor." Thus writes the historian of the Prophet of Islam :—

"It was a triumphal procession. Around the camels of Muhammad and his immediate followers rode the chief men of the city, clad in their best raiment and in glittering armour. The cavalcade pursued its way through the gardens and palm groves of the southern suburbs ; and as it now threaded the streets of the city, the heart of Muhammad was gladdened by the incessant call from one and another of the citizens who flocked around : ' Alight here, O Prophet ! We have abundance with us, and we have the means of defence, and weapons, and room : abide with us.' So urgent was the appeal, that sometimes they seized hold of Al Qaswa's halter. Muhammad answered them all courteously and kindly. "The decision," he said, "rests with the camel : make way therefore for her ; let her go free. It was a stroke of policy. His residence would be hallowed in the eyes of the people as selected supernaturally, while any heart-burnings of the jealous tribes, which otherwise might arise from the quarter of one being preferred before the quarter of another, would thus receive a decisive check."

It chanced that the animal halted at a spot owned by two orphan boys. The Prophet, summoning the lads to his presence, proposed to purchase the piece of ground ; but they refused, saying, "Nay, but we will make a free gift of it to thee." But Muhammad refused the pious offer, and insisted upon paying over to the youths a fitting sum, in accordance with the worth of the land. Having received possession of the property, he proceeded to erect thereon a mosque, where he established a daily service of prayer, while at the same spot, once

in every week, he proclaimed to the assembled multitude the new faith embodied in the formula "There is but one God." When all was finished, the Prophet be thought himself of his worldly concerns, and celebrated his nuptials with Ayisha, to whom, as before stated, he had now been affianced upwards of three years. The circumstance of this marriage is important, as henceforward polygamy became an institution in the Muslim world, hallowed as the custom thus was by the example of their Prophet, who, it should be kept in mind, up to this period had limited himself to a single wife.

The first anxiety of Muhammad, after matters had settled down at Madina, was to league himself with the Jews, whose religion had afforded him the groundwork of his own creed. So Jerusalem became the "Qibla" or holy spot towards which the pious worshipper turns his face when he prostrates himself in prayer. Not content with this, too, a formal agreement, known as the Treaty of Madina, was concluded with the descendants of Abraham, confirming them in the practice of their religion, and in the secure possession of their property. But Judaism and Islam were antagonistic in principle; the Prophet of Madina could never be the Messiah of Jerusalem, seeing that the offspring of the Quraish was not the descendant of David. So the Jews began to murmur against Muhammad. "This Prophet of yours," said they, in tones of contempt, "knew not where to find his 'Qibla' till we pointed it out to him." Angered and distressed, he poured forth his soul to his Guardian Angel:—"O Gabriel, would that the Lord might change the direction of my face at prayer away from the 'Qibla' of the Jews!" "I am but a servant," was the response of the messenger from Heaven; "address thy prayer to God." Thereupon Muhammad petitioned the Lord his Creator. "Turn now thy face toward the Holy Temple of Mecca," was the mandate to the trustful believer; thus the Kaba became the 'Qibla' of Islam. This occurred in the month Rajab, A.H. 2 (Nov. A.D. 623).

It may well be imagined that Muhammad bore no love towards the people of Mecca, who had not only refused to receive his new religion, but had even rendered his abode in their town a matter of more than difficulty. As soon, therefore, as he had somewhat consolidated his position at Madina, he commenced reprisals against the Quraish by harassing their caravans as they journeyed to and from Syria. The Prophet did not himself at first accompany these plundering excursions, which were indeed designed probably more to try the temper of the people of the city of his adoption towards himself and his followers than to inflict any injury upon his enemies. But in the summer and autumn of A.D. 623, Muhammad led in person three somewhat larger expeditions; the results were in each case insignificant, save as indicative of the fact that Muhammad was prepared to act on the *offensive* as well as the *defensive*, thus foreshadowing the great events which were to be brought to pass in subsequent years. It is also worthy of note that, while scouring the country on the occasion of the earliest of these forays, the Prophet entered into the first treaty he had concluded with any foreign tribe, having signed an engagement with the Bani Damra "that neither party would levy war against the other, nor help their enemies." But the year, in its later months, was destined to play an important part in the annals of Islam. The Prophet on his return from his unsuccessful expeditions determined to send forth Abdullah ibn Jahsh with seven other refugees. His destination and the objects of his journey were unknown to any one save the Lawgiver of Arabia himself, who placed in the hands of the leader of the party a sealed packet of instructions, with the injunction that it should not be opened till the band had journeyed two days on the road, and had entered the valley of Mallal. The mandate was scrupulously obeyed, and on arriving at the appointed spot Abdullah was astonished to find that he must "go forward to Nakhla in the name of

the Lord, and with his blessing! Yet force not any of thy followers against his inclination. Proceed with those that accompany thee willingly. And, when thou art arrived at the Valley of Nakhla, there lie in wait for the caravans of the Quraish." The little band unanimously determined to go forward and fulfil the commands of the Prophet; but two of the party, falling behind in search of a camel which had strayed, did not regain their companions. So the remnant, six in number, sallied forth towards the appointed locality: nor had they to wait long ere a caravan laden with wine, raisins, and leather, came up. Its guard, composed of four Quraishites, seeing the strangers became alarmed. So to disarm their apprehensions one of Abdullah's party shaved his head, thereby betokening that he was a pilgrim on his return from Mecca. The ruse succeeded, and the fears of the men of the caravan were lulled. At this juncture a difficulty occurred to the minds of the pious Muslims. "If," said they, "we should defer the attack this night, they will surely move off, and entering the holy territory escape us; but if we should fight against them now it is unlawful, for we shall be transgressing the sacred month." In the end, an arrow from the bow of one of their number solved the problem, for it killed on the spot the hapless wanderer from the tents of the Quraish; the band then rushed upon the caravan and secured two prisoners, while the third escaped on his horse. Muhammad professed to be displeased with what had happened, saying, "I never commanded thee to fight in the sacred month." But reflecting that it was not advisable to discourage his followers, he shortly afterwards proclaimed a revelation from heaven justifying as a lesser evil than idolatry and opposition to Islam, hostilities undertaken during that holy period for the propagation of the faith. "This," says a fervent son of Arabia, "was the first booty that the Musulmans obtained, the first captives they seized, the first life they took."

Scarce had A.D. 624 commenced its course than the

Prophet, calling together his followers, addressed them in words well calculated to inflame the minds of a people to whom the love of adventure is invariably an all-powerful incentive to action and enterprise : " Here," said he, " is a caravan of the Quraish, in which they have embarked much wealth. Come ! perchance the Lord will enrich you with the same." The people of Madina responded with alacrity to the call, and sallied forth to the number of 305 ; but the leader of the caravan, by name Abu Sufiyan, on his way back from Syria, hearing rumours of what was taking place, and finding from the date-stones in the track of the spies which Muhammad had sent forth, the direction of the Prophet's movements, diverted his course and escaped the machinations of his foes. Meanwhile, however, unaware of the circumstance, a messenger from the caravan had entered breathless and in haste the streets of Mecca, exclaiming, " Quraish ! Quraish ! your caravan is pursued by Muhammad ! Help ! O help ! " An army soon gathered together to punish the audacity of the exile from the Holy City. They had not proceeded far, when the news reached their camp of the safety of their goods and people ; whereupon some counselled a return, the object for which they set out having been secured. Others, more warlike in their aspirations, pleaded that such a course would expose them to the taunt of cowardice. " Let us go forward to Badr, and there by the fountain spend three days in eating and making merry. All Arabia will hear of it, and will ever stand in awe of us." The advice was acceptable, and the 950 warriors of Arabia advanced towards the city where it had been decided they should encamp.

Muhammad was fully alive to the importance of the struggle upon which he had entered—immediately before the battle he implored the assistance of the God whose cause he was supporting. " O Lord ! I beseech thee forget not Thy promise of assistance and of victory. O Lord ! if this little band be vanquished Idolatry will prevail, and the pure worship of Thee

cease from off the earth." The contest commenced, after the fashion of Arabian warfare, with single combats, in which it chanced that the champions of the Quraish were discomfited and slain. Encouraged by this circumstance, the followers of the Prophet fought with a vigour which carried everything before them. Still, in spite of prodigies of valour, the fate of the day tottered in the balance. At length, however, Muhammad, who had busied himself encouraging his followers, by holding out the prospect of Paradise to those who fell, seeing his opportunity stooped down, and taking a handful of dust cast it towards his enemies, exclaiming, "Confusion seize their faces!" It was the turning-point in the struggle. The Quraish began to waver, and soon an indiscriminate flight commenced throughout their ranks. They fled indeed for their lives, for they had no mercy to expect at the hands of their zealous opponents, in whose estimation pity was weakness and mercy a token of effeminacy—forty-nine of the people of Mecca were slain, and as many more taken prisoners, while the followers of the Prophet lost but fourteen. Such was the celebrated battle of Badr, which occurred on the 12th January, A.D. 624.

The sword of war had now been drawn from the scabbard of peace, and henceforth success in arms became the criterion of Muhammad's prophetic claim. The victory at Badr was but the foretaste of blood, and from this time the hand of extermination was raised against all those who refused to accept the teachings of Islam, or bow the knee to the Apostle of Madina.

The first to feel the weight of Muhammad's displeasure were the Jews; relentless and unforgiving, the Prophet determined upon the annihilation of the race. The pretext for attacking them was paltry and ludicrous. An Arab girl happened to sit herself down in the market-place, when a Jew, stealthily approaching from behind, pinned the lower hem of her skirt to the upper portion of her dress. On arising the exposure which followed drew down upon her the ridicule of the

bystanders, one of whom, however, more irritated than amused, slew the offender, whose kinsfolk in turn fell upon the hasty-actioned Muslim. The Prophet at once sent his followers to avenge the death of their companion in faith, and the hapless Jews, to the number of about 700, were blockaded till they surrendered at discretion. Marked out for execution, the poor wretches chanced to find an honest outspoken protector amongst the bands of the Muhammadans, and on his intercession Muhammad consented to spare their lives, and commanded that the captives should be sent into exile. "Let them go. God curse them, and God curse him also!" was the angry denunciation of the enraged Prophet against the children of Abraham and their deliverer. This occurred in February, A.D. 624. Foiled of his prey Muhammad retaliated by giving his followers permission to kill any Jews whom they might chance to meet, a privilege of which the pious fanatics were nothing loth to await themselves. Alarmed and cowed, the Israelites, with trembling steps, repaired to their exasperated foe, and ultimately concluded a new treaty with the view of securing themselves from molestation, if not death. Towards the close of the year Muhammad, though in the midst of "wars and rumours of wars," did not lose sight of the attractions of home, and took to himself a fourth wife in the person of Hafsa, the daughter of Omar, a matron who had been left a widow some six or seven months before her espousal to the Apostle of Islam.

The new year opened ominously as regards the Prophet and the band of enthusiasts, by whom he was surrounded; for the Quraish then carried into execution the long deferred threat of revenge, which they had harboured since their defeat at Badr. Emerging forth from the city of Mecca to the number of 3,000, of whom 700 were mailed warriors and 200 cavalry, they encamped in the plain of Ohod, situated about three miles from Madina. To oppose this host Muhammad mustered but 700 followers; but they were all men of



mettle, animated with religious zeal, and determined to "do or die." The battle commenced with a series of mishaps on the part of the Quraish, whose champions, were one by one, laid low in the dust, and the cry "Allahu Akbar" (God is great), raised with ever increasing enthusiasm and fervour, betokened successive victories to the sturdy warriors of Islam—the fight itself, too, was for a time much in favour of the heroic little band from Madina, who, animated by the presence of their Prophet hurled destruction upon the ranks of the enemy. Indeed, in course of time the Meccans began to waver, and confusion overtook their ranks. But the cup of victory was destined to be dashed from the lips of the Muslim army. Encouraged by the success of their arms, the Prophet's followers could not resist the temptation of plundering the camp of their foes; whereupon one of the Quraish leaders seeing his opportunity wheeled round and attacked the Muslims in the rear, a terrible struggle ensued—again and again the ranks of the Faithful were broken, and as repeatedly the calls of their chiefs reinspired their stout-hearted followers to fresh deeds of prowess—warrior after warrior fell beneath the swords of the maddened sons of the desert; when suddenly a cry arose that the Prophet himself was slain; nor was the alarm altogether groundless, for not only had a stone struck the leader of the Faithful in the face, knocking out one of his teeth, but another severe blow had driven the rings of his helmet into his cheek, and gashed his forehead; blood flowed copiously from Muhammad's wounds, and he was carried off the field of battle, helpless and hopeless as a leader of men. The Quraish soon became masters of the field; but their feelings of hatred were against the Prophet rather than the city, and contenting themselves with the defeat of their foe, they betook themselves back to Mecca—thus passed the disastrous 26th January, A.D. 625. From amongst the ranks of the Muslims no less than seventy-four corpses lay mangled in the dust, many of them barbarously disfigured, for

the feelings of revenge, which for many a month had been pent up within the bosoms of the Quraishites, found vent in the mutilation of the slain, and the example of Hind, the wife of Abu Sufiyan, who is said to have torn out the liver of her victim, Hamza, and chewed it, stringing, at the same time, his nails and pieces of his skin together to bedeck her arms and legs, was followed by many a frenzied virago of Mecca "as a return for Badr." "I was not giving counsel," was the exclamation of the leader of the Meccan army on hearing of the mutilation of the dead, "but neither am I displeased thereat."

The misfortune at Ohod was a severe blow to the hopes of Muhammad,—a cloud obscuring the sun of Islam's greatness—and it needed all his skill to reanimate his followers: so the never-ending joys of Paradise were promised to all who had fallen on the fatal plain. "Yea, they are alive and are nourished with their Lord. No terror affecteth them, neither are they grieved." Such was the rhetoric of the Prophet; heaven and hell were enlisted in his service to do battle for the drooping warriors of Madina.

The remainder of the year passed comparatively uneventfully, save that towards its close the Bani Nadir were forcibly expelled from the Jewish settlements in Madina. So Muhammad, having leisure to bethink himself of domestic matters, espoused Zainab, the widow of a kinsman slain at Badr. Not a month elapsed, too, ere (Jan. A.D. 626) he wedded a fifth wife in the person of Omm Salma, also a widow; while the same year was destined to add a sixth fair lady to the harem of the amorous Prophet. It happened thus: One day Muhammad chancing to visit the house of his adopted son, Zaid, the wife of the latter, by name Zainab, hastily arranging her dress, bade the Lawgiver of Arabia enter. But the lustful eye of the leader of the Faithful had caught a glimpse of her unvested charms, "Gracious God Almighty" was the rapturous exclamation, "how thou turnest the hearts of man-

kind." Proud of her conquest, the woman informed her husband on his return, as to what had occurred. Nothing loth to profit by the circumstance, Zaid at once repaired to Muhammad, and declared his readiness to divorce the wife of his bosom to make way for such an illustrious successor. The alliance, however, was not in accordance with Arab morals, and for a long time the Prophet struggled with the better feelings of his nature, till at last he received a message from Heaven, and Zainab was added to the list of the wives who graced the home of the Apostle of Islam.

It was at this time that the seclusion of women was enjoined upon the Muslim world. Having himself had personal experience in regard to the danger arising from the freedom hitherto allowed to the daughters of Arabia, the Prophet not unnaturally argued that the disciple was not likely to be more discreet than his master. So a revelation came down from the Almighty bidding Muhammad place his wives (henceforth designated the "Mothers of the Faithful") "behind a curtain," while, when walking abroad, they were to "throw around them a part of their mantle," that they might not "be subject to annoyance."

The waning weeks of the year A.D. 626 were rapidly drawing to a close when Muhammad resolved to chastise the Bani Mustalhiq, who were raising troops to join in an attack on Madina; the tribe fell an easy prey to their jealous foes, and numerous captives were brought back by the exultant followers of the Prophet—amongst the number was Juwaira, the daughter of the chief of the offending Arabians. This lady fell to the lot of a citizen, who taking advantage of her rank and comeliness "fixed her ransom at nine ounces of gold." Unable to raise such a sum, she pleaded before Muhammad that the amount should be lessened. "Wilt thou hearken to something better than that thou askest of me?" was the insinuating reply of the Commander of the Faithful? With timid lips the coy maiden begged of the conqueror to name his conditions. "Even that

I should pay thy ransom and marry thee myself" were the words which fell on the amazed ears of the daughter of Arabia. So a seventh wife was added to the rapidly increasing list of the "Mothers of the Faithful." At this time a trouble fell upon Muhammad, in that his favourite wife Ayisha, being accidentally left behind in a nocturnal march, returned in the morning in company with a stranger; this led to an estrangement between the husband and wife, to the great joy of the enemies of the Prophet. Matters went on moodily for a time, till one day the offended spouse openly taxed his wife with misconduct, and bade her repent. She refused, alleging that she was innocent. Thereupon Muhammad fell into a prophetic trance, on awakening from which he exclaimed, the drops of sweat trickling down his cheeks as he spake, "Ayisha, rejoice! Verily the Lord hath revealed thine innocence. Praise be to God." So a command was issued: "They that slander married women, and thereafter do not bring forward four witnesses, scourge them with fourscore stripes."

But the anxieties with which the Prophet was surrounded were not confined to domestic scenes. Scarce had the year A.D. 627 commenced its course than a Quraish force of no less than 10,000 men besieged Madina—so sudden indeed had been their approach that Muhammad barely found time to make ready for the attack. Unable to withstand in the field such a powerful army, the Muslims resolved in haste to entrench the town, and act on the defensive—a subterfuge characterized by their enemies as "a foreign artifice, to which no Arabs had ever yet descended"—an artifice, which, none the less, saved the city for a while, till the master mind of the Prophet, who viewed war as a "game of deception," was enabled by cunning and treachery to sow discord amongst his foes, and paralyze their energies. The siege was indeed protracted, but nature lent her powerful assistance to the cause of the people of Madina, and a storm of wind and rain fell upon the besiegers, who, wet, dispirited, and comfortless,

were only too glad to betake themselves again to their homes. Thereupon the pious Muslims persuaded themselves that the armies of heaven had been ranged on their side ! Thus ended the "battle of the ditch."

Scarcely had the sturdy warriors laid aside their armour than a command came from on high, "Arise and go forth against the Quraiza," a Jewish tribe, who had detached themselves from the cause of the Faithful during the attack on Madina. After a siege of fourteen days the wretched Jews were forced to surrender ; whereupon the men, to the number of 700 or 800, were led forth with their hands handcuffed behind their backs, and taken in companies of five or six at a time to the breach of a trench, where they were ruthlessly butchered in cold blood !—one solitary prisoner was spared, but, on learning that all his comrades had been slain, he begged that he might also be killed. "Of what use is life to me any longer ? Slay me also, that I may join those that have preceded me," was the fearless request of the fearless child of Israel. "Yea, he shall join them in the fire of Hell," was in turn the relentless reply of the relentless Prophet of the Muslims. The women of the party were sold into slavery, save one, Rihana, whom the founder of Islam reserved for himself. But the lovely matron, faithful to the memory of her husband and brethren—who one and all had been massacred—refused to yield her charms to the savage victor who had ordered such a "human butchery." The licentious conqueror was himself conquered ; and the all-powerful Lawgiver of Arabia had to court as a slave a Jewish widow, too proud to abjure the faith of her ancestors, and too noble to become the wife of the murderer of her husband, the destroyer of her kinsfolk !

After a year (A.D. 627) had been passed in several minor expeditions against various marauding and refractory tribes, Muhammad, who had not for six years visited his native city, bethought himself that the time had arrived when he should give a practical token of his zeal and piety by undertaking a pilgrimage to

**Mecca.** Accordingly, in February, A.D. 628, accompanied by about 1,500 men, he started from Madina. But the Quraish were obdurate, and refused to allow the Prophet to enter the holy city. At length, however, after repeated parleys and discussions, a treaty was concluded between the tribe in question and the Muslims, arranging for a truce of ten years, and for the immediate withdrawal of Muhammad and his followers, with permission to return on the same errand the following year, provided that every one who should avail himself of the privilege of performing the pilgrimage, should appear without any weapon save what is allowed to a traveller, viz., a sheathed sword. The people of Islam, sad and dejected, betook themselves to their homes, and it needed all the energies of their Prophet to persuade them that what had happened was for the best. An addition was thereupon made to the sacred mandates, and a revelation from Heaven proclaimed that God had given unto them "an evident victory." What is this victory? was the rejoinder of a simple-minded bystander. The artless followers of the Prophet did not realize that "on all other occasions there was fighting, but here war was laid aside, tranquillity and peace restored; the one party henceforward met and conversed freely with the other, and there was no man of sense or judgment amongst the idolaters who was not led thereby to join Islam."

With a singularity of purpose which can only be explained by the firmness of his belief in the faith which he had founded, Muhammad about this time conceived the strange notion that he would summon the various states and empires by which he was surrounded, to embrace the doctrines of the faith he had founded. Accordingly, in the autumn of A.D. 628, he dispatched a missive, sealed with a seal bearing the inscription, "Muhammad the apostle of God," to the Roman Emperor Heraclius, then in the zenith of power, having subdued and driven from his throne the mighty monarch of Persia. The strange, uncouth

despatch was viewed as the "effusion of some harmless fanatic," and cast aside with scorn and disdain. A second, addressed to the Ghassanide Prince of Arabia, met with no better fate ; while a third, which reached the hand of the King of Persia, was torn in pieces by the incensed Sovereign. " Even thus, O Lord, rend Thou his kingdom from him," was the prayer of the offended Prophet on hearing the reception of this last missive. An embassy to Egypt met with more success, for the Roman Governor, while refusing to recognize the Prophet, sent for his acceptance "two damsels, highly estimated among the Copts, a present of raiment, and a mule for thee to ride upon." Of the two damsels Muhammad retained one for his own harem ; and she became noteworthy as the mother of the only son born to the Prophet. The mule, which was white, was greatly prized by the Lawgiver of Arabia, and henceforth took the place of the camel upon which he had been wont to ride. The summons addressed to the Court of Abyssinia was couched in language similar to that which had hitherto failed to allure other Christian potentates ; but in this instance the result was more encouraging, as the swarthy monarch expressed his readiness to embrace the new faith, but lamented his inability to join in person the standard of the Prophet. The sixth and last messenger despatched by Muhammad was sent to the Christian Chief of Yamama. The reply which the envoy was charged to convey to his master merits recital : " How excellent is that revelation to which thou invitest me, and how beautiful ! Know that I am the poet of my tribe, and their orator. The Arabs revere my dignity. Grant unto me a share in the rule, and I will follow thee." But the Prophet taught unity, alike as regards the Godhead and the Apostleship, and no one could be allowed to participate in the sovereignty of Islam. " Had this man stipulated for an unripe date only, as his share in the land, I could not have consented. Let him perish, and his vain glory with him ! "

The year A.D. 628 was now fast passing away, and the expectation of plunder, which the Prophet had held out to his faithful followers, had not been fulfilled ; not, indeed, that Muhammad had been forgetful of his promise—he was far too prudent to overlook an opportunity of enriching his bands at the expense of their enemies, but the occasion had not presented itself. The Lawgiver of Arabia had indeed cast his eyes upon the rich and fertile lands of Khaibar, a town about 100 miles from Madina, inhabited by a colony of Jews ; but no act of aggression on the part of the inhabitants had occurred, and the Muslim chief was unable to fix a quarrel upon his peace-loving foes. Despairing of finding a legitimate pretext, Muhammad resolved on a sudden and unprovoked invasion of the Jewish territory. Utterly unprepared for resistance, their forts fell one by one into the hands of the 1,600 warriors who raised on high the Muslim standard. One citadel alone had courage to resist, and under Kinana, who had recently succeeded to the chiefship of the Jews of Khaibar, a long and desperate resistance was offered ; but in the end the city capitulated, and torture and death were the reward of the ill-fated descendants of Abraham, while the royal widow, a hapless matron of bewitching beauty and loveliness, was forced henceforth to grace the home circle of the Lord of Arabia. But retaliation was at hand : it chanced that there was a Jewish woman who had lost her husband, her father, her brother, and other relatives in the battle : her bosom was filled with revenge : accordingly she planned a scheme to rid mankind of the victor at whose command the blood of her kinsmen had flowed in streams down the streets and highways of the doomed city. Dressing a kid, and steeping it in a deadly poison, she placed the dish before the Prophet, who himself ate thereof, and gave to those around him. But scarcely had he tasted a mouthful than he exclaimed, “Hold ! surely this shoulder hath been poisoned !” and he spat forth what was in his mouth. Though seized with ex-



cruciating pains, Muhammad gradually recovered, but to his dying day he felt the effects of the poison which had been imbibed into his system. The daughter of Abraham was foiled, but her victim had not passed through the ordeal scatheless.

On his return to Madina, Muhammad took to himself a ninth wife, in the person of Umm Habiba, the daughter of Abu Sufiyan. This fair matron was like all her predecessors in the apostle's harem a widow; her husband had long since died in Abyssinia, and it is conjectured that the Prophet was moved by motives of policy to add the lady to his long list of spouses, hoping that she might thereby be enabled to soften in some measure, the animosity of her father, a bitter, unrelenting, and withal powerful opponent to the faith of Islam.

The time had now arrived when Muhammad, according to the treaty concluded with Quraish, might again perform the pilgrimage to Mecca. Accordingly, in February, A.D. 629, he started on his journey of piety with upwards of 2,000 of his followers, many of whom had not for several years visited their native city. The ceremonies passed off without any remarkable incident, save that the Prophet, though now burdened with the weight of more than threescore years, took occasion to add a tenth daughter of Eve to his harem. The favoured lady was a widow, by name, Maimuna, and though upwards of fifty-one years of age, she lived for thirty years, to boast that she has been numbered amongst the wives of the Apostle of the Lord.

Muhammad now thought himself strong enough to measure swords with the Imperial troops of Rome; so taking advantage of the murder of a messenger, who had been despatched to the Ghassanide Prince at Bostra, he sent an army of 3,000 men to invade the Syrian frontier. The Muslims fought with the desperation of fanatic zeal. Victory or martyrdom was the motto of the day—but it was of no avail, the well-drilled Roman phalanxes pressed upon the brave but

comparatively ill-disciplined bands composing the Muslim army ; leader after leader was slain, covered with wounds, and the skill and powers of the veteran Khalid, who had succeeded to the command, were sorely taxed to draw from the field the shattered remnant of his troops. This battle of Muta (September, A.D. 629), was, for a while, a severe blow to the prestige of Muhammad, and the rest of the year was consumed in a variety of expeditions, planned with the object of restoring to Islam that influence which could not brook defeat or reverse.

Fate was at this time pregnant with importance to the Prophet, who saw his opportunity of attacking Mecca,—the dream of his life,—the one great object of his ambition. A blood feud between two rival tribes, one of whom sought his assistance, afforded him the pretext which he had so long and so anxiously awaited. Concealing his designs till all his preparations were completed, Muhammad, on January 1, A.D. 630, marched forth from Madina, at the head of from 8,000 to 10,000 men. With the view of impressing the people of Mecca with an exalted idea of the mighty army of troops which were about to sweep down upon the sacred city, the Prophet commanded that as they approached the town, each of his followers should kindle a fire on the heights above the camp. The design was successful, and Abu Sufiyan, the leader of the Quraish, who had witnessed the blaze from the walls of his capital, conceiving the notion that opposition was in vain, betook himself in the dead of the night to the tent of the Apostle of God, and embraced the faith of Islam. The defection of their leader secured the submission of his troops, and in a few hours the Prophet had accomplished his destiny—he was now Lord of Mecca ! It was, indeed, a proud moment for the Lawgiver of Arabia, a moment, too, when all the noble qualities of his nature stood forth in grandeur ; for in spite of the provocations which he had received, in spite of the insults, the contumelies which the people of Mecca had heaped upon his head,

in spite, too, of the circumstance that eight years previously he had himself been driven forth an exile to Madina,—he spared the city. The affection and goodwill of the citizens were the reward of a magnanimity and moderation which have few parallels in the history of the world.

But Muhammad had no time for repose, for after an interval of about two weeks spent in purging the spot of its idols, he was compelled to set forth at the head of an army to chastise a neighbouring tribe, which had assumed an attitude of defiance. The rival troops met at Hossain on 1st Feb. A.D. 630. For a while victory was in suspense, but the fervent exhortations of the Prophet encouraged his followers to deeds of desperation, and at length the Muslim banner floated over the tents of their foes. The glory of this day was in some measure counterbalanced by the subsequent failure of the Muhammadan army before Tayif, a city which, being well provisioned and surrounded by strong battlements, successfully resisted the attacks of the warriors of the faithful. Mecca was now subdued, and firm in its allegiance, so leaving a foreman to rule the people, Muhammad betook himself once again to the city of his adoption. There seated in his Mosque, he received embassies from all quarters of Arabia, the various chiefs thinking, by an early submission, to secure the favour of a potentate, so powerful as a friend, so dangerous as a foe. "Simple though its exterior was," says Sir W. Muir, "and unpretending its forms and usages, more real power was wielded, and affairs of greater importance in the courtyard of the Mosque of Muhammad than in many an Imperial palace."

But the sunshine of prosperity was overclouded by a domestic affliction, which bore heavily upon the soul of the Prophet. Ibrahim, the son whom the Coptic maid had borne to him in his old age, and save his daughter Fatima, the only surviving member of Muhammad's offspring, was struck with illness. "Ibrahim! O Ibrahim!" cried the fond father, in accents of despair,

as he wept by the bedside of his dying child, "if it were not that the promise is faithful, and the hope of resurrection sure; if it were not that this is the way to be trodden by all, and the last of us shall join the first, I would grieve for thee with a grief deeper even than this." But his words were addressed to a lifeless corpse; the spirit of the tender infant had fled to the Lord its maker. Prayers and intercessions could avail nought, so the Prophet turned aside. "The remainder of the days of his nursing shall be fulfilled in Paradise," was the comforting assurance which he gave to the comfortless mother.

The country was at this time disquieted by rumours of a Roman invasion, to repel which a Muslim army of upwards of 30,000 warriors assembled in October, A.D. 630; but when they marched forth towards Syria they found the peace of the border undisturbed; so they returned home, yet not before they brought to submission John the Christian Prince of Ayla or Aqaba, which potentate entered into a treaty with the Prophet, covenanting amongst other things to pay a yearly tribute to the Lord of Mecca. This campaign is worthy of note as being the last expedition undertaken during the Prophet's lifetime.

The following year, A.D. 630-631, was spent in sweeping away the remnants of idolatry, which still existed in some places, co-equally with the worship of the One God. Amidst the cries and lamentations of the women, the idol of Lat at Tayif was hewn down and broken to pieces. No idolater in future could take part in the pilgrimage; no unbeliever henceforth should enter Paradise. The mission of Islam was inexorable: Jew, Pagan and Christian were alike set aside; the religion of the future was to be the worship of the One God. "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Prophet," had become a factor in the world's history; the key of Paradise was, to use the Prophet's own striking words, "to testify that there is no God but the Lord alone. With him there is no partner."

The work of Muhammad was now well nigh complete ; from north, south, east, and west there was a constant stream of embassies, charged with tendering homage to the Prophet who had risen to power. With the weight of sixty-three summers on his shoulders, it might have been supposed that the venerable Apostle would wish to pass in ease and repose the remaining years of his eventful life ; but this could not be done till he had performed the Greater Pilgrimage to Mecca. Accordingly, in March A.D. 632, the Prophet, assuming the pilgrim garb, set out on the journey to the sacred city, followed by vast multitudes ; when all the ceremonies were concluded, he betook himself to a spot in the Valley of Mecca, and addressed the people in memorable terms. "Ye people ! hearken to my words ; for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you here again," was the stirring commencement of an exhortation, which was felt on all sides to be the parting words of the speaker who stood before the assembled multitude. Then followed a variety of injunctions regarding the social duties of the Muslims, alike in respect of their private households, as with reference to their relations towards one another. This done, looking up to Heaven, the Prophet exclaimed, "O Lord, I have delivered my message and fulfilled my mission !" "Yea, thou hast," was the response of the teeming multitudes around him. "O Lord, I beseech Thee bear Thou witness unto it." With these words the Prophet closed his address. The occasion and the language were alike remarkable—it was the seal of Islam.

The end was evidently rapidly approaching ; sick in body, and emaciated in frame, it remained for Muhammad only "to busy himself in the praises of his Lord, and to seek for pardon." Such, in his own words, was *now* his mission. No longer able to visit in turn the homes of his numerous wives, he announced his intention of betaking himself to the abode of Ayisha, who had from the *first* possessed an inscrutable hold over the affections of

her husband. Faithful to her charge, the youthful wife—she was at this time but twenty years of age—watched and tended the bedside of her aged lord and master ; the affection of so young and beautiful a damsel for the aged and infirm Prophet was touching and pathetic. It was the *romance* of Islam. Prostrate with fever, and scarce able to move from his couch, the Apostle of God felt that his end was at hand ; so repairing, though with tottering steps, to the Mosque, he there, amidst the tears and sobs of his faithful followers, addressed them in accents of mingled pride and affection. But the excitement of the occasion was too much for his exhausted strength, and for some days the flame of existence flickered in the socket ; at length, however, the paroxysm of pain passed away, and, finding a slight return of strength, the Prophet again appeared before the congregation. It was a striking scene—the Mosque, at all times full when Muhammad was present, was on this occasion, the memorable 8th June, 632, thronged to suffocation, for the dangerous condition of his illness had become known throughout the city. With slow and weary steps the venerable Prophet, supported by two attendants, repaired to his accustomed spot ; too weak to lead the devotions, the task devolved upon the faithful Abu Bakr ; yet “the Lord verily had granted unto Muhammad refreshment in prayer,” and, mustering the feeble remnants of his decaying strength, he spoke with emotion as to the single-mindedness of his actions, and his belief in his mission. But the effort severely taxed his emaciated frame and feeble energies, and on reaching his apartments he was seized with an attack of delirium. Ayisha thereupon lifted his right hand, and rubbed it to restore animation, repeating at the same time an invocation which the Prophet himself had been wont to use when visiting the sick. It may well be imagined his weak body could ill bear such rough, though affectionate usage ; so, on recovering his consciousness, he begged that he might be left quiet. *He then muttered a scarce audible prayer: “ Lord grant*

me pardon, and join me to the companionship on high." Too weak to continue his devotions, he lay back on his bed, and there was stillness, interrupted at times with ejaculations, "Eternity in Paradise. Pardon! Yes, the blessed companionship on high!" Grand, noble expressions were these, the last words which hung on the lips of the dying Muslim. After a few moments, perceiving a change, Ayisha, with her arms around her lord, looked up as the grey head grew heavy on her breast. It needed not the instinct of a ministering angel to realize that the soul of the Prophet of Arabia had winged its way to the Mansion in the skies. . . . Such was Muhammad: such his life, such his death! "He was piously interred," says the historian of the Roman Empire, "on the same spot on which he expired. Madina has been sanctified by the death and burial of Muhammad, and the innumerable pilgrims of Mecca often turn aside from the way, to bow, in voluntary devotion, before the simple tomb of the Prophet."

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SUCCESSORS OF MUHAMMAD.

## ABU BAKR.

THE first to enter the apartments of Ayisha, after the death of Muhammad, was Omar, who, glancing at the calm, placid countenance of his departed friend, could scarce bring himself to believe that the hand of death had robbed Arabia of its Prophet. "Verily, by the Lord, he shall return," was the honest, but self-deceiving exclamation of the fervent Muslim, as he rushed into the Mosque and harangued the assembled awe-stricken multitude. The chamber of death then received another entrant—the faithful Abu Bakr, who, hastening from his home, rushed to the apartment where the Prophet lay stretched a stiffened corpse; gently removing the coverlet, he stooped down and kissed the cheeks of the scarce cold frame—the kiss of devotion at once dissipated all doubt. "Yes, thou art dead! Alas! my friend, my chosen one—dearer than father or mother to me! Thou hast tasted the bitter pains of death, and thou art too precious in the sight of the Lord that he should give thee this cup a second time to drink." Repairing to the Mosque, he bid the excited Omar cease his frenzied exhortations. "Let him know," so taught the calmer of the two preachers in the temple, "whosoever worshippeth Muhammad, that Muhammad indeed is dead; but whoso worshippeth God, let him know that the Lord liveth, and doth not die." The familiar voice of *Abu Bakr* recalled his companion to his senses.



"By the Lord," he used to exclaim in after years, "it was so, that when I heard Abu Bakr reciting those verses, I was horror-struck, my limbs trembled, I dropped down, and I knew of a certainty that Muhammad indeed was dead."

A contention now arose between the people of Mecca and Madina as to the succession to the chief command—the crisis was serious—the fate of Islam depended on the issue; Abu Bakr pleaded that the Arabs would not recognize a successor save he belonged to the tribe of Quraish; but the indignant citizens of Madina rejected the idea with scorn, claiming *their* right to choose their own leader, even should the command be divided. "That can never be," was the stern rejoinder; "so choose ye whom ye will of these two," saying which he led forward Omar, and a bystander, by name Abu Obaida, "and do allegiance to him." But the generous-minded Omar refused the proffered honour. "Did not the Prophet himself command that *thou*, O Abu Bakr, shouldest lead the prayers? Thou art our Master, and to thee we pledge our allegiance, thou whom the Prophet loved the best amongst us all!" The clear, powerful voice of Omar disarmed opposition, and Abu Bakr was saluted as the "Khalif" or successor of the deceased Prophet.

On the morrow, the quondam rivals repaired to the Mosque, where Omar, addressing the great assemblage, bid them swear allegiance to the companion of the Prophet, "the second of the two when they were in the cave alone." The people flocked around the new Khalif, and one by one paid homage to the chosen of God. Abu Bakr then delivered himself of an inaugural address, the words of which were well chosen, and the sentiments therein no less noble:—

"Ye people! now, verily, I have become the chief over you, although I am not the best amongst you. If I do well, support me; if I err, then set me right. In sincerity is faithfulness, and in falsehood perfidy. The weak and oppressed *among you in my sight* shall be strong, until I restore his

right unto him, if the Lord will ; and the strong oppressor among you shall be weak until I wrest from him that which he hath usurped. Now hearken to me : when a people leaveth off to fight in the ways of the Lord, He casteth them away in disgrace ; know also that wickedness never aboundeth in any nation, but the Lord visiteth it with calamity. Wherefore, obey ye me, even as I obey the Lord and his Apostle. Whosoever I disobey, then obedience is no longer obligatory upon you. Arise to prayers ! and the Lord have mercy on you."

Scarce had Abu Bakr been installed as Leader of the Faithful, than the Arabs in various regions, seized the opportunity which the death of the Prophet afforded, of refusing to pay alms to the Khalif, as enjoined by the Muhammadan law. Chief amongst the offenders was Malek ibn Nuwaira. To bring the recusant to submission, Khalid, "the sword of God," as he is designated by Greek and Arab historians— was sent "to talk with him" about "the matter." The refractory chief at once avowed that "he could say his prayers without paying that," a remark which so incensed the zealous Muslim warrior, that he at once resolved upon the death of the outspoken opponent of Islam. Seeing that escape was hopeless, Malek turned round and looking upon his wife, a woman of surpassing beauty, exclaimed, "This woman has killed me." "Nay," said Khalid, "God has killed thee, because of thy apostacy from the true religion." "I profess the true Religion," was the ready rejoinder—but the headless trunk of the victim told in language which could not be misunderstood, that backsliding held no place in the faith of the early followers of Muhammad.

A more serious matter however, soon engaged the attention of the "Defender of the Faith." During the last year of Muhammad's life, a person of the name of Mosailam set up as a Prophet of Islam, and gave forth a book in imitation of the Quran. His power was not at first considerable, but the events of the year had added to the number of his followers, and now (A.D. 632) he began to be so formidable an opponent,

that it became necessary to despatch a body of troops to Yamama, a province of Arabia, where he had established himself. Accordingly Khalid and other commanders were sent forth at the head of an army of upwards of 40,000 Muslims; the combatants met at a place called Aqraba, where a furious battle ensued, but at length Mosailam was pierced with a javelin, and the loss of their leader was soon followed by the defeat of his adherents, ten thousand of whose corpses testified to the zeal with which they fought in defence of their religion.

Abu Bakr having thus set matters at home in order, bethought himself of the injunctions of the Prophet that "true Muslims must fight till all people were of the true religion;" accordingly, summoning together his followers, and pointing out the success which had already attended their arms, he enquired whether it was their wish to carry the war into the region of Syria. Meeting with a ready response to a proposal so much in accordance with the pious zeal of the enthusiastic converts to the religion of the Prophet, Abu Bakr at once sent a circular-letter to all the leading men in Arabia acquainting them with his design, and bidding them remember that "fighting for Religion is an act of obedience to God." A large array of warriors was the response to this exhortation; appointing as general of the forces Yazid, the son of Abu Sufiyan, for many a lengthened year the bitter enemy of Muhammad, he sent them forth to "conquer or to die." It soon became evident that the troops of the decaying Empire of Rome were no match for the hardy and inspirited soldiers enrolled under the banner of Islam, and victory bestowed her favours upon those who most deserved them. Encouraged by the success which attended these efforts, Abu Bakr found no difficulty in inducing the inhabitants of Mecca to emulate the deeds of their brethren of Madina, and another army under the command originally of Said ibn Khalid, but subsequently of Amru, famous in after years as the *conqueror of Egypt*, was despatched to swell the ranks

of the Faithful in the regions of Syria. The command of the united forces was placed in the hands of Abu Obaida, whose piety did not unfortunately counter-balance his want of military experience ; so after a while he was replaced by the valiant and courageous Khalid. City after city was now compelled to open its gates to the all-conquering Saracens—the name by which the Muslim warriors are known to history. One town alone had the courage to resist. Bostra, a populous and wealthy mart, where the commerce of Syria, Iraq and the Hijaz, poured riches into the lap of luxury, was rash enough to refuse to listen to the overtures of the Muslims that she should surrender her faith and her liberty. Trusting to the solid walls which encompassed the town, the inhabitants prepared to resist ; at the first, success attended them, and encouraged by the reverses which befel the Saracens, they were emboldened to sally forth and encamp in the plain. But the goddess of victory, fickle in her favours, deserted the Bostra standard, and the ramparts of the town ere long towered down upon the mangled corpses of her faithful citizens. A religion of peace could ill contend with a creed in which fighting was an article of faith ; the cross of Christianity had been vanquished by the crescent of Islam. Still the people, though defeated, were not subdued ; but the perfidy of the governor, Romanus by name, completed what the zeal of Khalid and his soldiers had commenced. Wrapped in a coat wrought with gold, the faithless traitor proceeded in the dead of night to the camp of the Muslims, and offered to deliver up the town, which he had sworn to defend ; his overtures were accepted, and a hundred intrepid warriors returned with him to his house, whence they emerged disguised as Christians to wreak vengeance upon the unsuspecting defenders of the city. The issue could not be doubtful, but the verdict of mankind has branded with infamy and disgrace the name of an apostate, who was a traitor to his sovereign, his subjects, and his God.

The redoubtable Saracens now turned their steps towards Damascus, the rich and flourishing capital of Syria, to which city they laid siege. The Roman Emperor Heraclius, beginning to get alarmed at the success which befell the Muslim arms, despatched a band of 5,000 men under a general of the name of Calous, to the assistance of the beleagured town. At the onset the Christians despised their enemies, and did not hesitate to sally forth in the plain ; but the trunkless heads of their general, and of the governor, which were thrown over the wall by the victorious Muslims, soon caused the trembling followers of the Cross to realize that their only chance of safety lay within the ramparts which towered above them. They contrived, however, to despatch a messenger at night to apprize the Emperor of the fate of his general, whereupon an army of 100,000 men under the command of Wardan, was sent to relieve Damascus. For a while success inclined towards the Saracens, and the famous Dirar, one of the boldest and most intrepid warriors that ever did battle for the crescent of Islam, was wounded by the son of the Grecian general ; but his Saracen antagonist, incensed at the outrage, drove his lance through the hapless youth with such violence that the point was left sticking in the bone, and the Roman hero tumbled a lifeless corpse on the plain. The Muslim, however, was weakened with loss of blood, and fell into the hands of his enemies. The Saracens now made the most strenuous efforts to turn the tide of fortune, and the valour of Khalid compensated for the captivity of Dirar. At length the Grecian army, no longer able to withstand the furious onslaughts of their intrepid antagonists, began to waver. The Muslims pursued them for a while, till having rescued Dirar from the hands of his enemies they ceased from further efforts, and returned to Damascus.

The Emperor Heraclius had no disposition to part with his possessions in Syria, and the capture of Damascus could of necessity mean nothing less than the loss of the region of which it was the capital ; so he for a

second time despatched Wardan at the head of an army of 70,000 soldiers to raise the siege of the city. Matters now began to assume a serious aspect for the Saracens, whose forces were not only diminished by war but scattered over the country, some at Balka, on the confines of Syria ; others in Palestine, while a third body of men was in Iraq. It became necessary, therefore, to concentrate the troops thus distributed over a large expanse of territory, and accordingly Khalid penned a letter to the various commanders, apprising them that a vast army had come forth "that they might extinguish the light of God with their mouths," and bidding all friends of the Faithful to repair without delay to a certain spot. The letter met with a ready response, and 45,000 Muslims joined the hand of fellowship in the appointed locality on the appointed day, the 13th July, A.D. 633, an occasion memorable in the annals of Islam.

Meanwhile, news had reached the inhabitants of Damascus that succour was at hand ; this intelligence encouraged the citizens to sally forth in the hope of overpowering their enemies. Falling upon the rear of the Saracens the Christian soldiers seized a rich spoil of wealth and baggage, while numerous captives were taken back as prizes to the victors. Amongst the number was Qaula, the sister of Dirar, a woman endowed with a vigour of frame and energy of mind which would not have disgraced her scarce more valiant brother. Summoning her sister captives, she bade them "die honourably rather than live scandalously ;" whereupon, forming themselves into a circle, they armed themselves with tent-poles, and the shattered skull of many a noble of Damascus, who with amorous step had ventured to approach the noble-minded Saracen heroines, betokened that to a maiden of Arabia honour was no less precious than life. Thus were they defending themselves from the polluted touch of the Christian debauchees, when the victorious swords of their Saracen brethren completed *the work which the tent-poles, in the hands of their*

maidens, had so heroically commenced ; and in an incredibly short space of time three thousand lifeless frames bit the dust, under the lance of Khalid and his avenging band.

Hastening to the field of Aiznadīn, where the scattered forces of the Saracens were now united to give battle to the troops of Imperial Rome, the Muslim leader rode through the ranks of his men, bidding them "Fight in good earnest and take religious part." Nor was Wardan less zealous amongst the cohorts under his charge. "Call upon Christ and he will help you," was the encouraging exhortation to soldiers to whom it was pointed out "for their comfort" that they mustered three to one as compared with the army of the Infidels. Before the battle commenced Dirar, ever ready to undertake an enterprize of hazard and danger, was sent to gain tidings of the enemy ; he was surprised by Wardan as the latter was riding on a white mule decorated with the gold which embellished the purple of Imperial Rome. Seeing a "fierce and naked" warrior scouring the plain, the Christian General bid some of the Emperor's soldiers fall upon him. But of the thirty who ventured upon the errand, seventeen soon lay in the dust, some unhorsed, some in the agonies of death, while Dirar returned in safety to receive the censures of his General. "Did not I warn you not to fight without order," was the hesitating rebuke of the more sober-minded Khalid. "Nay," said Dirar, "I did not begin first, but they came out to take me, and I was afraid that God should see me turn my back." A venerable Greek now offered to purchase the departure of the Saracens by a gift to each soldier of a turban, a robe, and a piece of gold, while their leaders were to receive ten robes and a hundred pieces of the precious metal ; one hundred robes, and a thousand coins being reserved for the Khalif. "Ye Christian dogs," was the scornful reply, "you know your option, the Quran, the *tribute*, or the sword. We are a people whose delight *is in war, rather than in peace*, and we despise your

pitiful alms, since we shall be speedily masters of your wealth, your families and your persons." But in good truth, the Muslim Commander was deeply conscious of the danger which impended. "You see before you," said he to his impatient troops, "the united force of the Romans ; you cannot hope to escape, but you may conquer Syria in a single day."

The General of the Roman army now bethought himself to gain by stratagem what he had not as yet achieved by force of arms, and endeavoured to entrap the leader of the Saracens, so as the more easily to bring destruction upon his followers. The device which was planned was revealed by a traitor, and punishment recoiled upon the plotting Wardan, whose head was destined to grace the spear of the honest-minded and valiant Khalid. "There is no security where there is no faith kept," was the laconic exclamation of the Muslim, as he cast in the dust the lifeless trunk of the Christian dog. The death of their leader was as usual, the signal of defeat, and the corpses of 50,000 followers of the Cross, which lay strewn on the field of battle, testified that the apathy of the Imperial Rome was no match for the enthusiastic fervour of the newly-founded faith of Mecca.

The Saracens were now at liberty to resume the siege of Damascus. Despair would have induced the citizens to capitulate, but the valour of the Emperor's son-in-law, a noble of the name of Thomas, infused new life into the Christian defenders of the town, and it was determined to make a sally. Innumerable lights placed upon the turrets betokened that something unusual was at hand, and the morning found both the followers of the Cross and the Crescent engaged in invoking the help of the Powers on High. Thomas, an incomparable archer, was ever in the thickest of the fight, and many a son of the Faithful closed his eyes in death, pierced with an arrow from the unerring bow of the lion-hearted Christian marksman. Among the rest a bridegroom from amongst the leaders of the Saracen Army, lay on the field of battle, mortally wounded by a dart from the



same hand. Vowing vengeance, the incensed and desolate bride, scarcely waiting to bury her husband, hastily seized a bow and quiver ; her first arrow pierced the hand of the standard-bearer, while the second shot out the eye of the " Christian dog " who had slain her husband, so that the hapless Thomas was thereupon forced to withdraw into the city. The fight was continued till the evening, when the Arabians rested for a while ; but the intrepid soul of the Emperor's son-in-law thirsted for the destruction of his enemies, and at his instigation, at a given signal, in the dead of the night, all the gates of Damascus were thrown open and a general attack was made upon the Saracen camp. But the activity of Khalid—the sword of God—counterbalanced the impetuosity of his scarcely less illustrious Christian brother-in-arms. Ejaculating a short prayer to "the God who never sleepeth," the Meccan General seizing his arms, led his troops to the front. The battle waged furious but at length fortune deserted the unfortunate Damascenes, and once again they were compelled to betake themselves within the ramparts. The siege had now lasted for seventy days, and it became more and more evident that the city could not hope much longer to hold out against the insatiate fury of the followers of the Prophet. So a party of deputies, at the hour of midnight, sought the protection of Abu Obaida—a leader whose mild and gentle character had inspired the beleaguered garrison with respect and admiration. Their request was granted, and the city was spared ; but meanwhile the impetuous Khalid had been conducted into Damascus by a renegade priest, who professed to have read in the book of Daniel the impending doom of the town ; the relentless warrior put to the sword all who came across his path, and the blood of the Christians streamed like water down the streets of proud Syria's prouder capital. Thus fell Damascus on 6th August, A.D. 634.

The Muslim Khalif, however, was not destined to receive these tidings of great joy, for on the very day





*Abu Bakr and Omar.*

on which the black eagle of the Saracenic troops waved over the ramparts of the doomed city, Abu Bakr was seized with a serious illness, occasioned as some suppose by the imprudent use of a bath on a cold day. Fever ensued, and the successor of Muhammad feeling that his end was at hand, called his secretary and gave written directions that "Omar should sit on the throne of power;" for fifteen days he battled with death, but the issue was never doubtful. On the 6th August, A.D. 634, Islam was called upon to mourn the loss of the leader of the Faithful, whose death occurred at the age of sixty-three. For more than two years he had held the sword of dominion, yet such was the simplicity and uprightness of his disposition that the lord of the Saracen monarchy at his decease was possessed of but five gold coins—the savings of a lifetime! As to the rest he had distributed amongst the public, what the public had acquired. Well may Omar have exclaimed that "he had left his successor a hard pattern." Such was Abu Bakr, whose pious zeal gained for him a niche in the temple of fame, far more honourable and renowned than attached to his rank as Khalif, in that he was the first who gathered together the scattered chapters of the Quran, a work consecrated by the devotions of untold myriads, who regard it with a veneration and esteem which command admiration and deserve respect; a work which is the prized heritage of every follower of the Prophet, who penned its sacred pages and indited its holy ordinances.

#### OMAR.

The same day (6th August, A.D. 634) that Abu Bakr died, Omar was invested with regal dignity, and saluted by universal consent as "Amiru'l Momanin" the Emperor of the Believers—a title first used on his accession, but afterwards universally adopted by succeeding Khalifs. The lust of conquest had at this time

seized the minds of the Saracens, and an invasion of the lands of Persia around the Euphrates was the field selected to give vent to the aspirations of the warriors of Islam ; but matters did not prosper, and it became necessary to raise new levies to succour their brethren in adversity. At this juncture things took a turn for the better ; and the Persians in these circumstances, attributing their defeat to the Monarch who ruled over them, deposed Queen Arzamidakht, and raised Yazdagird to the throne of the Chosroes ; the newly elected king made a vigorous effort to disperse the Saracens, then overrunning his dominions, but in vain, and the loss of two armies betokend that some more vigorous measures were needed than a change of dynasty.

Meanwhile the conquerors of Damascus were not idle. In the region around Tripoli, about 30 miles from the Syrian capital, was a holy spot known as Dair Abi'l Qudus, or "Monastery of the Holy Father," tenanted by a priest eminent for his singular learning, piety, and austerity of life ; thither persons of all degrees used to resort to receive the blessings of this earthly saint. It happened at this time that the Prefect of Tripoli had married his daughter to a grandee, and had sent the young lady to receive the communion at the hands of the revered priest. The occasion was great, and the assemblage large. Moved by the rich harvest of plunder, a body of five hundred Saracens bore down suddenly upon the astonished penitents ; in a few moments the standard of Islam waved proudly amongst the unresisting multitude of Christians ; but the audacity of surprise had but a short-lived glory, and after a few moments of victory the small but enthusiastic band of Muslims was hemmed in on every side like "a white spot in the skin of a black camel." In this crisis Khalid came to the rescue ; after the siege of Damascus and the pursuit of its inhabitants for many miles into the territories of the Emperor of Rome, the "Sword of God" *had been censured* for his rashness, and deprived

of his command, which was made over to Abu Obaida ; but the occasion was now serious, so swearing with an oath that if the command of the army had been given to a "child he would have obeyed him," Khalid buckled on his armour, and flew to the rescue of his comrades in arms. His presence turned the tide in favour of the Arabians.

"The Christians," says the historian of the Roman Empire ; "were broken by his attack, and slaughtered in their flight as far as the river of Tripoli. They left behind them the various riches of the fair ; the merchandises that were exposed for sale, the money that was brought for purchase, the gay decorations of the nuptials, and the governor's daughter, with forty of her female attendants. The fruits, provisions, and furniture, the money, plate, and jewels were diligently laden on the backs of horses, asses, and mules ; and the holy robbers returned in triumph to Damascus. The hermit, after a short and angry controversy with Khalid, declined the crown of martyrdom, and was left alive in the solitary scene of blood and devastation."

Town after town now fell into the hands of the followers of the Prophet. Heliopolis the capital of the valley, and Hems the metropolis of the plain, alike threw open their gates to the conquerors of the Cross. Of minor cities, some were taken by treachery, while others endeavoured by a speedy capitulation to secure the protection which their valour had not the means of attaining. Heraclius, wearied with the constant and uninterrupted succession of messengers bringing ill news, and alarmed lest the Roman Empire should become the scorn of barbarian insolence, resolved to make a vigorous effort to regain his authority ; so collecting troops from all parts he gathered together a mighty army consisting of upwards of fourscore thousand soldiers ; while on the principle that "there is nothing like a diamond to cut diamond," the cavalcade of warriors was swelled by the presence of 60,000 light troops composed of Christian Arabs. The command of *this, the mightiest* army which had ever been

gathered in the regions of Syria, was placed in the hands of a general named Mahan. Both sides now prepared for the fight which was to determine the fate of the land. On this momentous occasion Khalid assumed his station in the front, while Abu Obaida was posted in the rear, under the shade of the yellow banner which the Prophet of Arabia had displayed beneath the walls of Khaibar. The last line was occupied by a phalanx of female warriors, whose presence lent to the weak-hearted amongst the Saracen hosts the enthusiasm of shame. The exhortation of Muslim generals was brief and characteristic: "Paradise is before you; the devil and hell-fire in your rear." The Christians fought furiously, and thrice the shattered ranks of the Arabs were broken; but the reproaches of the women drove back the wavering soldiers to the charge. It was the hardest and the most doubtful of the days which the veterans of the Muslim army had yet witnessed, and it is related that apart from those which were slain, no less than 700 testified by the loss of an eye that the dogs of Christians were no mean handlers of the bow. At length Mahan's vast army gave way before their enemies, and thousands upon thousands thereupon fell by the swords of the Arabs, so that the waters of the river became stained with the blood of the Christians ruthlessly slaughtered by a relentless foe, who neither sought nor gave quarter on the field of battle. Such was the memorable battle (Nov. A.D. 636) which broke the power of Imperial Rome, and made the Saracens masters of the regions of Syria.

The Muslim leaders now turned the eye of conquest towards Jerusalem, a city sacred alike to the followers of the Cross and the Crescent; sanctified to each by the memory of the Prophet in whom they trusted. Yazid, the Muhammadan general, was accordingly directed to "sit down" before the town; *but* at the lapse of ten days he had made no impression *against its stout walls and massive ramparts.* How-

ever, on the eleventh morning Abu Obaida came up with the remainder of the army, and at once sent a summons to the inhabitants to embrace the religion of Islam, else, said the zealous warrior "I shall bring men against you who love death better than you do the drinking of wine, or eating hog's flesh." But Jerusalem was strongly situated, amidst deep valleys and steep ascents, and the people having added to the defences of nature the fortifications of art, determined upon resistance. For four weary months the besiegers endured the sallies and assaults of the "Christian dogs," while the inclemency of the season added to the hardships suffered by the Saracen troops; yet not a murmur escaped the lips of the faithful veterans, and it became evident to the Patriarch who ruled within the city, that with such determined foes, the capture of Jerusalem could be but a matter of time: persuaded of this, Sempronius betook himself to the wall and tried, but in vain, to dissuade the Muslims from their purpose. In his extremity he agreed to capitulate on the condition that the Khalif himself should be present on the occasion—the Holy City of the Cross would submit to none but the noblest and most sacred representative of the Crescent. The council at Madina decided to gratify the whim of the Infidel, and the mighty "Emperor of the Faithful," whose wish was law, whose nod was death, started on his journey with but a handful of attendants, the greater part of whom moreover, eventually, on the way returned back to their own homes. The successor of the Prophet of Arabia rode upon a red camel on which were slung a couple of sacks, containing corn and fruit for the way, while a leathern bottle and a large wooden platter completed the modest equipment of the conqueror of Syria and Persia. Whenever he halted, his scanty band of fellow travellers joined without distinction in the frugal repast; and the power attaching to the position of Khalif was only discernible by the circumstance that, as opportunities presented themselves, Omar took occasion to reform the errors and



correct the vices of the people amongst whom he journeyed. On arriving at the city, he met several Muslims clad in the rich silks which had fallen into their hands as booty of war ; but the plain simplicity of the zealot could ill brook the pride of his sumptuously arrayed followers, whom he indignantly caused to be dragged in the mire, their cloths being at the same time rent in pieces before their eyes. Seated in a tent constructed of a material woven from coarse camels' hair, the Lord of the Saracen world received the submission of the sacred city of Jerusalem, and the year (A.D. 637) was not destined to expire ere a mosque dedicated to the worship of the God of Arabia stood on the spot where the temple of Solomon, since then unknown, even in its ruins, was hallowed in the memories of the pious Israelites by the glories and traditions of the national greatness of which it was an emblem. Good reason had the Muslim in the arrogance of conquest to exclaim, as he pointed with the finger of pride to the edifice which his zeal and piety had erected "Behold a greater than Solomon is here."

The next city to feel the weight of the Saracen might was Aleppo : but the town was situated in a position of great strength and defended by a governor Youkinna by name—of determination and courage. For five months in the year 638 of the Christian era, the fortress resisted all the attacks of the Muslim soldiers ; the loss on the part of the garrison was, it is true, immense, but still the resolute defenders held out, and it was reserved for the enterprise of a single soldier to accomplish what was denied to the courage of an army of veteran warriors. It chanced that amongst the Arabs who were sent by the Khalif to reinforce the Saracen army was a certain slave called Dames, a man of gigantic stature and indomitable energy—accompanied by thirty dauntless comrades. This prodigy of valour and daring planted himself, in the dead of the night, beneath the ramparts of the castle ; standing *with his back* against the wall the huge frame of the

herculean slave formed a support for his companions, who mounted on his shoulders, each one climbing above his fellow, till the human ladder reached the top of the tower ; stabbing the watchman, the Muslims linked their turbans, and one after another the whole of the band was drawn up. This daring feat successfully accomplished, the guard was at once overpowered, the bolts of the drawbridge were undrawn, and at dawn of day the Saracen standard waved proudly above the towers of Christian Aleppo. But the cup of bitterness had further to be quaffed by the people who ate hog's flesh and drank wine. Discouraged by the success which everywhere attended the arms of the warriors from Arabia, the luxurious city of Antioch was, in turn, glad to purchase her ransom for 300,000 pieces of gold, and on the 21st day of August in the year of grace 638, the glory of Cæsar passed under the yoke of victorious Islam.

Matters were now becoming serious for the Roman Empire ; to such an extent indeed did the danger press, that finding himself encompassed by traitors, neither the sense of shame nor the importunities of his people could inspire with zeal the indolently disposed Emperor Heraclius, who, secretly embarking with a few attendants bid an eternal farewell to the land of Syria, leaving his eldest son Constantine as an unequal champion against the forces of the ever-victorious Arabian hordes. The newly acceded monarch endeavoured to act with vigour, and encamping at Cæsarea, made a show of preparing for the defence of the town ; but shortly after he had reached the city, hearing of the loss of Tripoli and Tyre, both of which had been betrayed into the hands of the enemy, his heart failed him, and, embarking in the night, the Roman Prince followed the example of his father ; and quitting the land he had been left to defend, sought refuge and security in the luxurious and effeminate palaces of Constantinople. The hapless citizens of Cæsarea, thus *deserted by their sovereign*, at once surrendered,

and sought to propitiate their stern conquerors with an offering of 200 pieces of gold. The contagion of submission thereupon spread rapidly throughout the regions of the land, and the year of our Lord 639 witnessed the entire subjugation of the populous and wealthy plains of Syria.

For a lengthened period the insatiate Saracens had thirsted for the conquest of the rich and noble cities of Egypt, but their national architecture was solid, and the Nile with its innumerable branches formed an insuperable barrier to the progress of the Mussulman warriors. After a while, however, the ardour of the famous Amru, famous alike owing to the baseness of his birth and the prowess of his sword, could brook no restraint. After a siege of thirty days he captured Farma, a key which unlocked the entrance of the country to his faithful followers. He then proceeded to invest Memphis, the ancient capital of the Ptolemies and Cæsars. For seven months the Arabian engines of war battered in vain the walls of the devoted town, and the delay had been so great that the time was now nigh at hand, when the rising of the Nile would encompass the invaders with destruction. Even the hardy daring and unconquerable energy of the heroes of Islam could not resist the attacks of nature, the only foe to whom they bowed the knee of submission and defeat. At this critical juncture, Omar's lieutenant resolved to "do or die"; so making a bold and vigorous assault, he drove the Greeks to their boats, and the Pyramids of Egypt were destined to look down upon the Mosque which the pious zeal of the Muslim conquerer erected to consecrate the victory, and hallow the capture in the eyes of his fiery followers.

The Saracens at this time found in the heart of the country an alliance as unexpected as it was valuable. The Coptic Christians, a sect whom the persecutions of the Emperors of Rome had converted into a nation, welcomed the Muslim conquerors as their deliverers, *and swore allegiance to the Khalif.* This important

defection from the ranks of the Cross enabled Amru to concentrate all his energies upon the siege of Alexandria, at that time the emporium of the world. The Arabs behaved like lions, but the besieged were fighting for the dearest of human blessings—religion, property, and life—and a siege of fourteen months, during which the Muslims lost upwards of three-and-twenty thousand men, betokened the valour and courage of the defenders of the city. Still the finger of destiny had decreed that the Crescent of Islam should supplant the Eagle of Imperial Rome, and on the 22nd December A.D. 640, Amru was enabled to send to his master a missive, simple in expression but portentous with meaning, "I have taken the great city of the West." The capital of Egypt had, indeed, passed into the possession of the followers of the Prophet, with its palaces, its baths, its theatres, its shops, its houses. Alone amongst all the spoils of Alexandria the royal library had not been appropriated by the zeal of the conqueror. The boon was inestimable, and with earnest entreaties Philoponus, the learned custodian of these priceless treasures, pleaded against their destruction. Amru was in a measure inclined to gratify the wish of the man of letters, but refused to act otherwise than according to the mandate of the Khalif, his master. The answer of Omar is historical; it tarnished with infamy the escutcheon of a conqueror unwilling or unable to appreciate the precious trophy, the preservation of which would have lent glory to his reign and immortality to his moderation: "If these writings of the Greeks agree with the book of God, they are useless and need not be preserved: if they disagree they are pernicious and ought to be destroyed." So the incomparable collection which reflected the glory of the Ptolemies was used to light the fires of the baths of the city, and for six months the smouldering ashes of 700,000 volumes bore witness to the withering influence of bigotry and fanaticism.

*The genius of Amru who united in his person the*

qualities of warrior and administrator, turned his newly conquered territory into the granary of the Saracen world, and, when some time after his sway had commenced, a dearth overtook the land of Arabia, he was enabled to supply his famished brethren in the Peninsula with corn from Egypt: indeed native historians, whose zeal probably outran their veracity, would have it believed that the trains of camels laden with grain stretched in an unbroken line from Alexandria to Madina, a distance of some hundreds of miles! It will not occasion surprise that in these circumstances the Khalif, to whom the land was known only from the voice of fame and legend, became anxious to learn somewhat as to the kingdom of the Pharaohs; the reply of the conqueror of the country to the inquiries of his master is too singular to pass unnoticed.

“O Commander of the Faithful! Egypt is a compound of black earth and green plants, between a pulverized mountain and a red sand. The distance from Syene to the sea is a month’s journey for a horseman. Along the valley descends a river, on which the blessing of the Most High reposes both in the evening and the morning, and which rises and falls with the revolutions of the sun and moon. When the annual dispensation of Providence unlocks the springs and fountains that nourish the earth, the Nile rolls his swelling and sounding waters through the realm of Egypt; the fields are over-spread by the salutary flood; and the villagers communicate with each other in their painted barks. The retreat of the inundation deposits a fertilizing mud for the reception of the various seeds; the crowds of husbandmen who blacken the land may be compared to a swarm of industrious ants; and their native indolence is quickened by the lash of the task-master, and the promise of the flowers and fruits of a plentiful increase. Their hope is seldom deceived; but the riches which they extract from the wheat, the barley and the rice, the legumes, the fruit trees, and the cattle, are unequally shared between those who labour and those who possess. According to the vicissitudes of the seasons the face of the country is adorned with a *silver* wave, a verdant *emerald*, or the deep yellow of a *golden* harvest.”

Omar now ruled over a mighty Empire ; his administration was impartial, his ears were open to the complaints of the meanest of his subjects, while in no case could the rank of any offender exempt him from punishment. Pious, grave, and abstinent, he commanded unbounded respect, and in the quaint words of a pious Muslim historian, " His walking stick struck more terror into those that were present than another man's sword." His veneration for the faith of which he was the head, may be gathered from the circumstance that he was the first to introduce the " Hijra," or flight from Mecca to Madina, as the era from which Muhammadan chronology is computed. But his inflexible sternness had given offence to a Persian, by name Firuz, who, belonging to the sect of Magi, had as such been compelled to pay to his Muslim masters a daily tribute of two pieces of silver. Thinking to obtain relief at least in part from the hateful impost, the man appealed to Omar ; but the latter refused to listen to a suppliant who could well afford to expend what was demanded of him. Firuz, filled with resentment, waited his opportunity, and whilst the Khalif was saying morning prayer in the mosque, the Persian stabbed the leader of the faithful thrice in the stomach with a dagger. The Saracens present on the occasion at once rushed upon the assassin ; but thirteen of them soon lay low in the dust, seven of the number in the pangs of death, while the remaining six carried in their bodies to the end of their lives the marks of the Persian's revengeful weapon. At length one of the Muslims threw a vest over the murderer, who, finding himself at the mercy of his enemies, stabbed himself and fell at their feet a lifeless, quivering corpse. Omar lingered for three days and died (Nov. A.D. 644), after a reign of a little more than ten years, during which period the Empire over which he held sway had become enlarged by the powers of his generals, and the zeal and determination of his troops, to an extent that must have caused anxiety and alarm to the *surrounding* potentates, who, a few short years

in the past, had rejected as the aberrations of a madman the overtures which the Prophet of Arabia had made to princes and kings who mocked his messengers, and laughed to scorn the babblings of their master. Islam had now become a powerful factor in the history of the world.

#### OTHMAN.

While Omar lay on his deathbed, those around him endeavoured to persuade the dying Emperor of the Faithful to name a successor ; but of the many names suggested to him, not one pleased the austere Khalif, though eventually he was induced to mention six persons from amongst whom a selection was to be made within three days of his decease. This choice fell upon Othman, who succeeded to the Khalifat on the 6 Nov. A.D. 644. Following the example of his predecessors, as soon as he had assumed the reins of power he sought to enlarge the dominions which owned the sway of Islam, and after a succession of minor expeditions, extending over a period of two or three years, an army of 40,000 warriors advanced towards Africa, under the command of Abdullah, the son of Said, which latter, in the time of Muhammad, had been entrusted with the important office of transcribing the sheets of the Quran ; but the faithless scribe corrupting the text, fled to Mecca, where, thinking himself secure, he was imprudent enough to ridicule the work which he had been commissioned to engross ; the capture, however, of the sacred city convinced him of his folly, and he fell at the feet of the Prophet, whose ignorance he had so imprudently endeavoured to expose. His life was spared at the entreaty of Othman, and he repaid the kindness by serving with fidelity the religion which he had at one time laboured to subvert. After crossing the parched sands of the desert, the Arabs (A.D. 647) pitched their tents before the walls of Tripoli ; but the fortifications were strong, and enabled *the town to hold out till the arrival of the prefect*



*Ali and Ottoman*





Gregory, at the head of a disorderly host of no less than 120,000 troops, most of whom were Africans and Moors. Relying on the numerical superiority of his followers, the Roman general thought fit to reject with scorn the option of the Quran, or payment of tribute ; so the struggle commenced, and for two whole days the armies were engaged in combat, the fierceness of which was only abated at times by the necessity of seeking shelter during the heat of the day from the burning glare of the African sun. It chanced that the daughter of Gregory, a maiden of incomparable grace and beauty, wielded a scimitar amongst the ranks of the Grecian troops, and the fond father, in the pride of enthusiasm, was led to offer her hand, and 100,000 pieces of gold to the fortunate aspirant who could give as a dowry the head of the Arabian general. But Abdullah was too prudent to be entrapped, and withdrew his person from the field, a proceeding which had the effect of dejecting his friends, and encouraging his enemies ; the taunts, however, of a noble Arabian aroused the leader of the Muslims from his lethargy, and emulating the pattern of his rival, he proclaimed that the head of Gregory should be repaid with the hand of his captive daughter, and a sum of 100,000 pieces of gold. For a long while the balance of superiority swayed to and fro, neither Greek nor Saracen being able to claim the victory ; at length, however, the Muslims were induced to adopt a stratagem—simple in conception, but effective in result. Instead of engaging all their troops in the daily onslaught, the Saracen general kept a reserve of intrepid warriors, who, when the sun was high in the heavens, rushing upon the Greeks after the latter had prepared for the usual refreshment of the camp, surprised the Christian levies already fatigued with the toil of the morning fight. The prefect fell in the thick of the battle, his daughter was surrounded and made prisoner, and the plains of Barbary echoed with the prayers of the Faithful, as they knelt to return thanks to the *Lord of heaven and earth* for the recent victory

vouchsafed to their arms. After a campaign of fifteen months the Saracen army returned to Madina laden with spoils and wealth, and covered with honour and distinction.

While the sunny plains of Africa were thus the scene of Islam's glory, matters in Egypt had become somewhat serious. Amru, though he had done such service to the cause of the Khalif, had incurred the displeasure of his fickle master, who deposed his trusty lieutenant; with the result that Alexandria was recaptured by the troops of the Grecian Emperor, and once again the standard of the Cross waved over the imperial city of the plain. In this crisis it became necessary to restore the disgraced leader; but the latter, on resuming the command, found the Greeks in a good posture of defence, and for days they held out bravely. Their obstinacy provoked him to a degree that he took an oath that should God grant him the victory he would raze the walls of the town. He was as good as his word, and, ere long, the desolate houses and overturned buildings of the noblest city in Egypt testified to the ruthless barbarism of the warriors who founded an Empire on the ruins of the towns which their intemperate zeal would not permit them to preserve.

The same year (A.D. 647) which witnessed the capture of Tripoli, was signalized by the subjugation of the Island of Cyprus, and the invasion of Khorassan, one of the kingdoms of the Persian Monarchy. The circumstances of this last mentioned expedition were these:—Yazdagird, the Sovereign of Iran, finding himself unable to cope with the hardy warriors who had seized his lands and plundered his cities, invited Tarchan the Turk to his assistance; the jealousy, however, of the occupant of the throne of Alexander the Great soon led him to quarrel with his new ally, whom he sent back to his own dominions; but only to return after a while to vent his fury and indignation on the hapless Yazdagird by leaguings with the enemies who were plundering the fair lands of Persia. His army shattered,

and his followers dispersed, the king of the dominions of the Chosroes was compelled to take to flight, and coming to a mill he proffered his belt, his bracelets, and his ring for protection and food ; but the churlish miller, ignorant of the rank and position of the suppliant before him, rejoined in tones of displeasure that "he earned four pieces of silver with his mill every day, and if he would give him so much money he would let it stand still upon his account, if not he would not." While they were debating the matter, a party of horse came up, and in a few moments the lifeless corpse of the murdered sovereign revealed to the awe stricken miller the rank of the suppliant, and the cause of his importunity. Thus in the year of our Lord 651 the kingdom of the Medes and Persians passed under the yoke of the Khalif of Arabia.

Matters were now prospering abroad, beyond the dreams of expectation, but a storm was in turn arising at home. Othman, though a man of piety and of good disposition, was not fitted for Government, and numerous acts of impolicy alienated the hearts of not a few of his subjects. Murmurings were frequent, and accusations incessant. Lavish of treasure to his friends his enemies took occasion to tax him with improvidence ; whereupon in a public assembly he told the people from the pulpit that "the money which was in the treasury was sacred and belonged to God, and that he would dispose of it to whomsoever he thought fit, in spite of them." Not content with this vehement language, he threatened and cursed whomsoever showed any dislike of what he had said. A hapless bystander on one occasion inconsiderately announced *his* sentiments ; but he had reason to repent of his temerity, for he was at once beaten till he swooned. Such arrogant conduct on the part of Othman deeply incensed the Arabs, who, gathering themselves together, and raising their standard of rebellion, took up arms and encamped within a league of Madina. Alarmed at the disaffection of his subjects, the poor Khalif ascended the

pulpit in the Mosque, and solemnly before the whole congregation called God to witness that he was truly sorry for what was past, and that he heartily repented him of his misdeeds. But to no purpose. The outbreak gathered strength daily, till at length 200 men from Kufa, 150 from Bussora, and 1,000 from Egypt, leagued together to depose Othman. In this juncture the leader of the Faithful contrived to enlist the sympathies of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, whose influence, coupled with the promise of redress, for a while allayed the storm of discontent, and the rebels returned every man to his own land. The treachery, however, of his own secretary brought ruin and destruction upon the successor of the Prophet. This unscrupulous intriguer, by name Marwan, contrived that as the Egyptians journeyed homewards, they should intercept a messenger bearing letters sealed with the signet of the Emperor of the Faithful at Madina, to the effect that an individual of note whom the Egyptians desired as their Prefect should be impaled and put to death. Such barefaced treachery and perfidiousness on the part of the Ruler of the Saracens now became the one theme of conversation throughout the length and breadth of the peninsula ; none questioned the authenticity of the fatal document, which the crafty and insidious secretary had in good truth penned with his own hands. Feelings of revenge soon displaced the better dictates of the inflammable sons of the desert, and ere long a crowd besieged the door of the venerable Othman, clamoring for the blood of the tyrant, whose cruelty, in good truth, existed but in their own heated imaginations. In vain he offered every satisfaction, avowing that he never intended them any injury ; in vain did Ali send his two sons, Hasan and Husain to protect the aged Khalif from violence. Forcing open the door the infuriated malcontents found Othman with the Quran in his lap ; falling upon him, one wounded him in the throat, while a second stabbed him *with a sword*. The hapless Patriarch then fell to the

ground, whereupon one of the murderers sat upon his bosom, and with savage vindictiveness gashed the defenceless successor of the Prophet till death released the quivering frame from its pains and sufferings. Thus died (July 10th, A.D. 655) the aged Othman ; bowed down with the weight of more than eighty years, his feeble limbs and tottering steps might have pleaded for mercy ; but the assassins were implacable, and for three days the murdered corpse lay unheeded and unburied, festering in the heat of an Eastern sun ; in the end necessity compelled what decency failed to secure, and the blood-stained body was cast into a hole, unwashed, unhonoured, and unsung. Strange destiny ! that the proud ruler, whose will was law, he at whose command the mighty Empire of Rome shook to its base, while the Monarchy of Iran lay humbled in the dust, should have been denied the sacred rites which accompany the burial of the meanest, the vilest of God's creatures on earth below. Well may the pious historian of the Saracen Empire have moralized as to the "vanity of human greatness and the uncertainty of all earthly felicity."

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE TWELVE IMAMS, OR SPIRITUAL HEADS OF ISLAM.

## I.—ALI.

THE death of Othman caused no little stir amongst the Saracens, who were divided in their wishes as to the election of a successor. In the confusion which ensued several persons came to Ali, the spouse of the Prophet's daughter Fatima, and desired of him that he would accept the Government. To these solicitations he rejoined that he did not wish for the honour himself, but would readily bow to the choice of any person upon whom they might agree. They still insisted that no one was so well qualified as himself, whether as regarded his personal accomplishments, or his near relationship to the Prophet of Arabia. But the "Hand of God" (as Arabian historians delight to call him) was inexorable, and ultimately it was agreed that the matter should be referred to the chief inhabitants of Madina; these latter came to Ali with an appeal to his piety. "We adjure thee by God!" such was the forcible language of the religious enthusiasts of Islam. "Dost thou not consider in what condition we are? Dost thou not consider the religion? Dost thou not consider the distraction of the people? Dost thou not fear God?" Moved with these expostulations, and it may well be supposed secretly overjoyed at the prospect before him, Ali consented to comply with the wishes of his fellow countrymen; but aware that his enemies were neither few in number nor inconsiderable in *influence*, he prudently insisted that the allegiance

of his subjects should be publicly tendered in the Mosque, rather than in private at his own house. Accordingly, clad in a thin cotton gown, tied about him with a girdle, having a coarse turban upon his head, his slippers in one hand, and a bow in the other instead of a staff, the son-in-law of Muhammad repaired to the sacred edifice, with the view of receiving the homage of the citizens, who had elected him to the dignity of Khalif. This occurred in A.D. 655.

As soon as Ali was publicly acknowledged successor to the throne, he inconsiderately resolved to take away the governments and lieutenancies from all those persons who had been nominated by Othman, his predecessor. In vain did faithful friends remonstrate against the needless folly and perilous danger of raising up a host of enemies, ere he was well secure at his capital—in vain did they point out that it behoved him not only to be a man of courage—this could never be questioned—but a “man of conduct.” Ali was deaf to all representations, and the fiat went forth; murmurs of discontent followed the rash resolve, and a body of malcontents was speedily formed; these at the instigation of two men of influence by name Talha and Zobair, inflamed by the malignant counsels of Ayisha, the favourite wife of the Prophet, but the bitterest and most implacable enemy of his daughter’s husband—betook themselves into Syria, whither they carried Othman’s blood-stained shirt—this latter they sometimes spread upon the pulpit, and at others raised it on high in the face of the army. While, more effectually to inflame the feelings of the people, his wife’s fingers, which were cut off at the time when the venerable Khalif was murdered, were pinned upon the shirt. The people of Syria, aroused at the piteous sight, vowed vengeance against a tyrant whom they supposed to have planned the murder of their sovereign, and whom they knew to have decreed the recall of their Governor. This last-mentioned personage, the well-known *Muawiyah*, so famous in the annals of after years,



finding that feelings of revenge and animosity were deeply implanted in the hearts of the people under his charge, did not vouchsafe to give a reply to the messenger whom Ali had sent to Syria. At length, however, after an interval of about three months had elapsed, the proud and aspiring recusant bethought himself that he would send an answer to the Commander of the Faithful, so he selected an attendant, and delivering him a letter, sealed with the superscription "From Muawiya to Ali," he bade him repair with his comrade from Madina to the Khalif of Arabia. Entering the city in the evening when people were strolling in the cool, the emissaries carried the packet aloft upon a staff; they were soon surrounded by a band of inquirers, anxious to ascertain the reply of the Governor of Syria, whom they knew to be disaffected towards Ali. On reaching the Khalif, the latter seized the letter with evident tokens of anxiety, but great was his astonishment to find the missive a blank sheet of paper, not a single word of writing was visible; rightly understanding this token of contempt and disdain, he asked the messenger what news he had to convey? Whereupon the man replied that 60,000 men were in arms under the standard of Othman's shirt. The die was now cast, and destiny decreed that Ali's reign should be inaugurated with a war against the Syrians, whose animosity he had courted, and whose allegiance he had estranged. While these events, so pregnant with importance, were *transpiring* at Madina, a crier was parading the streets of Mecca proclaiming that "the Mother of the Faithful and Talha and Zobair are going in person to Bussora—whosoever therefore is desirous of strengthening the religion and fighting voluntarily to avenge the death of Othman if he hath no convenience of riding let him come." The people of the sacred city flocked eagerly to the standard of revolt, and upwards of three thousand warriors surrounded the litter of Ayisha, as, mounted upon a camel *and animated* with a spirit of unquenchable hatred to

the house of Ali, she turned her steps towards Bussora. The city, rent with factions, and divided in allegiance, offered no material resistance ; and after a skirmish, in which forty of his men were slain, the Governor submitted to the Amazon leader. The implacable matron at first ordered that death should be the punishment for resistance ; but the entreaties of her companions mitigated the severity of such a blood-stained decree, and the hapless suppliant was **allowed** to depart with his life ; at the same time, **however**, he was disgraced and humiliated with the loss of his beard and eyebrows, both of which were plucked out by the roots to appease the irritated Mother of the Faithful.

But to return to Madina. Though Ali was exceedingly popular, and though it was well known that he was fairly elected, yet all his eloquence—and he was allowed to be the best orator of his age—was not sufficient to stir up the people in his behalf. At length, however, one of the leaders in the town stepping forth proclaimed his readiness to unsheath his sword in the Khalif's behalf ; his example was soon followed by another zealous warrior, and history proclaims that a woman in the crowd, struck by the contagion of enthusiasm, offered the services of her cousin-germain whom she considered as dearer to her than her own life. The ardour of these patriots inflamed the hearts of their fellow citizens, and Ali was enabled to march forth from the city at the head of 900 men to confront the disturbers of his kingdom now esconced at Bussora under the command of his sworn foe Ayisha. His son Hasan, seeing the hopelessness of the enterprize, endeavoured to dissuade his father from the perilous attempt, and advised him to sit "still at home." The reply was typical of the resolute warrior whose brow had been graced by destiny with a crown : "Would you have me lurk in a hole like a wild beast till she is digged out. If I do not myself look after what concerns me in this affair, and provide for my *necessary* defence, who will look after it ?

Therefore, son, hold you your tongue!" So Ali and his party proceeded on their way.

When they had journeyed some days, the Khalif halted and despatched two messengers to Kufa, bearing a letter to his friends in that city, informing them "how much he preferred them to all the rest of the provinces, and what confidence he reposed in them in the time of his extremity," and adding "that they should keep the religion of God, and repair to him in order to make use of such means as might be proper for the reconciling of this divided people, and making them brethren again." The messengers, on arrival at the town, were surrounded with a crowd of the populace, but none demanded whence they came, or what they required: the silence was ominous. In the end some of the "hajis" or pilgrims who had visited Mecca, came to the Governor, by name Ali Musa, and inquired as to his views about going out to assist Ali. The answer would have reflected no discredit on the Oracle of Delphi:—"My opinion to-day is different from what it was yesterday. What you despised in time past hath drawn upon you what you see now. The going out and sitting still at home are two things. Sitting still at home is the heavenly way; the going out is the way of the world. Therefore take your choice." Again there ensued an ominous silence, broken only by the angry and reproachful exclamations of the messengers. Thereupon Ali Musa, waxing warm at the insults thus hurled against him, bade the men tell their master that the people of Kufa would have no dealings with a person round whose neck hung the murder of Othman.

All this while Ali was employing his time at the camp in haranguing and encouraging his people, who at his solicitation had been plentifully supplied from Madina with horses, arms, and all the necessities of war. "Keep close to your religion." So spake the head of the Muslim faith, "and be directed in the right way; for it is the direction of your prophet. Let what

is too hard for you alone, till you bring it to the test of the Quran; and what the Quran approveth stand to, and what it disapproveth reject. Delight in God for your Lord, and in Islam for your religion, and in Muhammad for your prophet, and in the Quran for your Guide and Director." The party was now joined by the ex-governor of Bussora, who came to wait upon the "Emperor of the Faithful," the beardless face of the hapless pilgrim betokened the sufferings he had undergone, and raised at once the compassion and the ire of his generous-minded master, who unable to restrain his indignation at the perfidy of Talha and Zobair, in that "their tongues were not according to their hearts," exclaimed in tones of wrath, "My God! they shall both know that I am not one jot inferior to any of my predecessors."

Full of anxiety as to the fate of his appeal to the people of Kufa, Ali received with trembling heart the message returned by Ali Musa to the overtures of reconciliation which had been addressed to him. The answer of the Governor was fatal to the resolve of his master, who could scarcely proceed against Bussora, unless assured of the assistance of the inhabitants of Kufa, so he determined once again to try and appease the storm which was gathering around him: but his efforts were fruitless. Last of all he despatched his eldest son Hasan, who was received with the respect due to his dignity and birth. Still Ali Musa persisted in his opposition: words ran high, and no small tumult arose, some wishing to march to the assistance of Ali, others preferring to remain true to their allegiance to the "Mother of the Faithful." When at length the debate passed the bounds of moderation, and feelings were at their highest, Hasan rose up and bid the people "hearken to the request of your Emperor, and help us in this calamity which is befallen both you and us. Thus saith the Emperor of the Faithful, Either I do injury myself, or else I suffer injury. If I suffer injury God will help me, if I do injury he will take vengeance upon me. By

God, Talha and Zobair were the first that inaugurated me, and the first that prevaricated. Have I discovered any covetous inclination, or prevented justice? Wherefore come on, and command that which is good and refuse that which is evil." This appeal touched the audience to the quick, and upwards of 9,000 citizens of Kufa joined the camp of Ali; the latter received them with honour as "men of distinguished valour" who had "conquered the kings of Persia, and dispersed their forces!"

The army of Ali now consisted of not less than 30,000 men, and the heart of Ayisha sank within her as she beheld in battle array round Bussora, a host of fighting men, not materially inferior in point of numbers to those who supported her cause, led by a commander whose prowess in battle had earned for him an appellation so endeared to the consciences of Muslim historians—the "Lion of God." Nothing daunted, however, the resolute Amazon mounted her camel, and, riding in a litter shaped as a cage, was carried up and down the ranks to inspire the soldiers with somewhat of the zeal and impetuosity which filled the breast of the most heroic, the most implacable heroine of which the annals of Islam can boast. So the "day of the camel" commenced; the contest was conducted with unassuageable fury on both sides, and for a long while the issue was doubtful. At this juncture Talha was pierced in the leg by an arrow; unable to control his horse he soon stretched his length on the field of battle, the faithfulness of his servant alone enabling his master to reach the town safe from the weapons of his enemies; but his end was approaching, and impending fate, so pious Muslims would have it believed, convicted the traitor of his sin, and on his deathbed he renewed the oath of fidelity which he had so recently and shamelessly violated. Ali, with a generous consideration for his enemy's want of faith, avowed that "God would not call him to heaven till he had blotted out the first breach of his word by this last protestation of fidelity." Thus one stumbling-block was

removed from the Khalif's path. The traitor's comrade in guilt, Zobair, too, having qualms of conscience withdrew himself from the battle, and took the road towards Mecca—but he was followed by an adherent from Ali's camp, who, overtaking him, and worming himself into the dispirited intriguer's confidence, treacherously cut off the head of his unsuspecting victim as the hapless Arab was prostrating himself at evening prayers. When the Emperor of the Faithful saw the blood-stained skull of his foe he denounced the latter as a denizen of hell, an illiberality of sentiment which so shocked the susceptibilities of the assassin that, repentant of his sin he ran his own body through with a sword, and fell a corpse at the feet of his astonished master. The chief conspirators were now removed from the scene ; but the struggle was not ended, and there still remained Ayisha, ever to be seen where the battle raged hottest and most severe ; the centre of attraction alike for friend and foe, her litter bristled, as it were the back of a porcupine, with the arrows which were launched at the intrepid leader of her troops, and no less than three score and ten hands which lay severed on the plain, beneath the feet of the beast which bore her, betokened at once the zeal of those who held her bridle, and the fury of the contest of which she was the very life and existence. Thus the day advanced till at length her camel was hamstrung, and no longer able to take part in the fray, she remained at the mercy of her victorious enemy. Ali, however, more considerate to his defeated rival than she had been wont to be to those whom *she* hated and disliked, dismissed her handsomely, with a goodly equipage, and sent her in company with his two sons, Hasan and Husain, to Madina, enjoining her at the same time not to intermeddle any more with affairs of State.

The Khalif after this eventful day encountered no further opposition, and marching into Kufa, established in that city the seat of his government. These important events occurred in A.D. 656.

Throughout all the dominions over which the Em-

peror of the Faithful held sway there now remained but one region where the standard of rebellion yet floated : in Syria, Muawiya still headed a people disaffected towards Ali, and eager to revenge the blood of Othman, whereupon a messenger was sent to him bidding him pay allegiance to his sovereign ; but he refused to listen to any one save Amru, the conqueror of Egypt, who was accordingly despatched, but finding on his arrival the position of affairs, the warrior linked his fortunes with the Governor of Syria, and amidst the acclamations of the people, the traitor to his trust took the oath of allegiance to his new Lord as Prince of the Muslim hierarchy.

When Ali was apprized of these proceedings he at first adopted gentle means to reduce the rebels to a sense of their duty, but, perceiving that his efforts were fruitless, he marched at the head of an army of 90,000 men towards the confines of Syria. Halting at Saffain, a full month (June-July, 657) was consumed in abortive efforts to settle the matter amicably ; but all his attempts were fruitless, and at the end of that interval the war began, not in the usual way of a pitched battle, but rather with a series of desultory onslaughts : indeed, scarce a day passed without an engagement of some sort, and it is said that no less than ninety skirmishes took place, in which Ali lost upwards of five-and-twenty thousand of his troops, while the slain amongst the army of Muawiya amounted to little short of five-and-forty thousand. This irritating and unsatisfactory method of warfare was ill in accord with the ardent spirit of the warrior of Islam, who called out to his antagonist, "How long shall the people lose their lives between us ? come hither. I challenge you to appeal to the decision of God, and whichever of us two kills his man has all entire to himself." But Muawiya refused, alleging with truth, that no man had ever come forth against Ali, and lived to tell the tale. So the slaughter continued, and the Syrians were sore *pushed* ; the crisis was serious, and it was reserved to

Amru to extricate his followers from a danger which threatened destruction. This crafty leader, seeing the impending discomfiture of his soldiers bade them hoist the Quran upon the points of their lances, and advance into battle exclaiming "This is the book that ought to decide all our differences: this is the book of God between us and you." The effect was magical—eager warriors, whose ardour no human power could restrain, at once threw down their arms, and appeared before Ali: "Will you not answer to the book of God?" was the zealous inquiry of these zealous bigots. In vain did the Khalif pointout that the whole affair was trickery and a deceit—the men were inexorable, and at the moment when victory was in his grasp, the "Lion of God" was compelled to sound a retreat. After much discussion it was determined that the difference should be settled by arbitration, and two persons were chosen to represent the contending factions. For eight months the armies remained listless and inactive; at the expiration of which time the decision was announced, in the sight of all the people from a tribunal erected for the purpose on the plain. It had been agreed between the umpires that both competitors for the throne should be deposed, and the choice of a successor left to the nation at large: accordingly mounting the rostrum the arbitrator selected to represent the interests of Ali, proclaimed that both the "Lion of God" and Muawiya should be set aside, and, suiting his action to his words, he drew off the ring from his finger, and cast it aside, to betoken that the Khalifat had been taken from the disputants. On the other hand his companion, departing from the agreement, proclaimed that the Governor of Syria should be the successor of Othman, "after the same manner as I put this ring on my finger;" a decision in which neither of the arbitrators agreed, settled nothing, and the armies separated leaving matters just as they were when the war began. But the action of Ali in referring to the judgment of men what ought to have been *determined* by God alone—such was the



language of his opponents—gave great offence to some of his adherents, and there arose a body of men known as the separatists, who held aloof from his interests and established themselves in the vicinity of Baghdad, whither all the malcontents flocked, till at length their number was swelled to five-and-twenty thousand men. It was impossible to leave such a formidable array of opponents as a standing menace to his authority and power, and Ali had no alternative but to reduce them to submission; so he presented himself before them at the head of a considerable army. Ere, however, giving the order for the attack, he planted a standard without the camp, and made proclamation with sound of trumpet, that whosoever would come under it should have quarter; while if any of them desired to retire to Kufa they should find there a sanctuary. The stratagem was completely successful, and no more than 4,000 men remained true to the cause of rebellion. This handful of desperadoes, none the less, resolved to attack Ali's army; but their presumption was greater than their success, for they were cut to pieces, and but nine of them escaped to repent of their rashness. This victory, which was gained in the year of grace 658, united all the Arabians under the government of Ali, and it only remained to reduce the Syrians to obedience. For upwards of two years attempts were made to subdue the refractory Muawiya, but the efforts were spasmodic and productive of no practical results; it was not so much a matter of the sword as of intrigue, and the poisoned bowl and the forged letter not infrequently did a work which the dagger failed to accomplish. The state of things was indeed wearisome and unsatisfactory; at one time Ali's lieutenants secured a victory over their opponents, while it occasionally happened that one of his generals, less fortunate than his master, was routed, and his dead body tied up in that of an ass and burned to ashes. In these circumstances three of the separatists met together at Mecca, and discoursing over the troubles of their nation and country, came

to the conclusion that all the ills which had befallen the people of Islam were due to Ali, Muawiya and Amru : so they resolved that they would rid the world of such fertile springs of discord, and restore to the Muslim nation that peace and unity of which there seemed no prospect in any other direction. Poisoning their swords the three conspirators separated ; the first to Kufa, the second to Damascus, and the third to Egypt.

As regards Muawiya, he was struck by the assassin, but the wound was not mortal, while Amru on the day selected for his murder chanced to be unwell, a fortunate circumstance, to which he owed his life ; a substitute who had filled his place at the mosque fell dead beneath the blow which had been intended for the conqueror of Egypt. "I designed Amru, but God designeth another" was the calm and unconcerned exclamation with which the cold-blooded assassin withdrew his sword from the innocent victim of his hate.

The third conspirator, by name Abdu'r Rahman, met with better success in his deadly mission. On arriving at Kufa he happened to take up his lodgings in the abode of a woman, whose nearest relation had been slain in the battle, and who for that reason retained in her heart a strong desire to be revenged upon the author of her misfortunes. Ingratiating himself with this fiendish-minded companion, the designing villain even went so far as to offer her his hand in marriage ; she in turn, eager for the blood of her enemy, readily consented, and joining with fervent ardour in the murderous plan of her pretended lover, merely stipulated that her dowry should be "3,000 drachms of silver, a slave, a maid, and Ali's head." The better to carry out her deadly purpose, and to guard against the risk of failure, she associated with her newly-arrived lover, two other men, named Wardan and Shabib. The three associates now repaired to the mosque, and pretending to quarrel amongst themselves, drew their swords ; but hardly were their weapons unsheathed than they all fell upon the hapless Ali, who soon lay at their feet,

struck down with a mortal wound ; he lingered for a few days, and died on the 19th day of the month Ramazan, in the year of the Hijra 40 (27 January, A.D. 661), having previously given directions that the assassin Abdu'r Rahman should be detained in custody, to await the result of his murderous attack ; if the blow should prove fatal, the generous Ali stipulated that one stroke should deprive the murderer of a life justly forfeited for the attack on the Khalif of Islam.

Thus died Ali, after a troublous reign of a little more than five years.

Among the surnames or honourable titles which the Muslims bestow upon Muhammad's son-in-law is that of Wasi, which signifies in Arabic "legatee" or "heir,"—that is, of the Prophet. His second title is "Mortaza," or "Mortazi," which being interpreted means, "Beloved by, or acceptable to God." He is also known as "Kanan," *i.e.*, the great "Curer," and sometimes as Bakhshanda the "Pardoner." His undaunted courage and unconquerable skill in battle also gained for him the appellation, "Asad Allah al Ghalib" or "the victorious Lion of God"; but he is more commonly known as "Haidar," which also in the Arabic language signifies "Lion." The Persians for a similar reason call him "Shir-i-Khuda," "the Lion of God," and not unfrequent mention of him is made as the "Hand of God," "Shah-i-marduman," the "King of men." Faizu'l anwar, the distributor of Lights and Graces, or Miru'l mumanin, the Prince of the Faithful.

Ali was buried at Kufa ; for many decades the site of his tomb was unmarked, but in the year A.H. 367 (A.D. 977), a sumptuous monument, which the Persians generally call Gumbad-i-Faizi'l anwar (the dome of the distributor of Lights), was erected to mark the spot which contains the ashes of a man beloved by his friends and feared by his enemies—a warrior who delighted in battle, but hated diplomacy,—a Khalif who, possessing unlimited and unrestrained power, was *endowed with a meekness and humility, which found*

expression in the inscription which he placed on the seal of the Empire : " The Kingdom belongs to the only mighty God."

## II.—HASAN.

When Ali had received his mortal wound, and it was perceived that life was ebbing away, those around him inquired whom he would nominate for his successor. The son-in-law of the Prophet replied that he intended in this matter to follow the example of the Apostle of God, who died without selecting a ruler of the Faithful, and that if it pleased God to favour them, He would, undoubtedly, unite their judgments in making a good choice. In these circumstances it seemed suitable that the mantle of the father should fall upon his elder son, Hasan, who, however, inherited more of Ali's piety than his courage, while being naturally of a peaceable disposition, he was ill-fitted to rule over a monarchy which needed a firm hand and a stout sword. When the Khalif had drawn his last breath, Hasan stood up and said to the people : " You have killed a man on that same night in which the Quran came down from Heaven, and Isa (Jesus) upon whom peace, was lifted up to Heaven, and in which Joshua the son of Nun was killed ; by God ! none of his predecessors exceeded him, nor will any of his successors ever be equal to him." After this harangue the speaker was inaugurated as Emperor of the Faithful. " Stretch out your hand," such was the formulary observed, " as a token that you will stand by the Book of God, and the Tradition of the Apostle, and make war against all opposers." " As to the Book of God and the Tradition of the Apostle, they will stand," was the pious rejoinder of the pious Khalif. The people then made obeisance, and stipulated that they would be subject and obedient to him, and remain at peace with his friends, and at war with his enemies. Some, however, the recollection of the Syrian war, with all its wearisome contests and indecisive

battles, filling their hearts with feelings of aversion and regret—hesitated as to this latter condition, and exclaimed : “ This man will never serve you for a master, we are not for fighting.” But upwards of 40,000 warriors had, in days of yore, bound themselves to stand by Ali in the matter of his dispute with the Syrians, and Hasan was persuaded, contrary to his own inclination, to put himself at the head of this body, with the view of reducing to obedience the rebel Muawiya, who, even before his rival was killed, had proclaimed himself Khalif, and who now refused to acknowledge the claims of Hasan, whom he charged with having been an accomplice in the murder of Othman.—The contending forces met at a place called Madayn, but a tumult in his army, on which occasion he was not only treated with discourtesy, but received a wound, —revealed to Hasan the alarming circumstance that his authority was precarious, and his power slight. So, weary at heart he wrote to Muawiya, resigning to the latter a sovereignty so beset with difficulties, and so fraught with danger. In the meanwhile, the Governor of Syria, judging from the position of affairs, that Hasan might not impossibly be disposed to listen to terms, sent him a sheet of paper completely blank, save in so far as it was signed at the bottom, and bade the timid-minded Imam write therein what conditions he pleased, which it was promised should be punctually and scrupulously performed. Hasan thereupon altered in his own favour the terms which he had previously proposed for Muawiya’s acceptance ; but his adversary, not unnaturally, preferred to adhere to the first letter, which he said truly was Hasan’s own proposal.

Ultimately it was arranged that (1) Muawiya should give up all the money in the treasury at Kufa ; (2) that Hasan should receive a vast estate in Persia, and (3) that Muawiya should make no reproachful reflection upon Ali, at least in the presence of the son of the latter. These conditions being settled, Hasan and *Muawiya* repaired together to Kufa, where the former

made a formal abdication of the Khalifat. "O people," such was the language of the Emperor of the Faithful, "God, whose name be magnified and glorified, directed you the right way by the help of the first of our family, and hath prevented the effusion of your blood by the means of the last of us. Muawiya contended with me concerning a matter, to which I had a better pretension than him; but I chose rather to restrain the people from fighting, and surrender it to him. But even this affair also hath a time prefixed for its duration, and the world is liable to changes." So Hasan, in company with his brother Husain, retired to Madina in the enjoyment of the magnificent income of upwards of £150,000. a year, most of which he spent in deeds of charity, But he was so little attached to the things of this world, that twice in his lifetime he deprived himself of all that he had, and on three other occasions he divided half of his substance amongst the poor.

Thus passed the first half of the year 661 of the Christian era. Authorities differ as to the precise duration of Hasan's reign, but it is generally considered to have lasted about six months.

Upon his coming to Madina he was blamed by his friends for having so tamely and easily resigned; but he answered that he was weary of the world, while the people of Kufa were, in his opinion, such a faithless and fickle nation that he could place no reliance upon their allegiance or assistance, seeing that no man ever reposed confidence in them but he was a sufferer for his rashness and folly; while never two of them concurred in their opinions and wishes; in short, they had no regard either to good or evil. So he turned away in disgust from a people whom he could neither trust nor admire.

While he was settled at Madina, it happened that the "separatists," who had occasioned his father so much trouble, raised an insurrection against Muawiya, and the latter thereupon wrote to Hasan, enjoining him to go forth against them. But the ex-Khalif desired to be excused, on the plea that he had quitted public affairs;

and that, if he had cared for fighting at all, he should have himself entered the lists with him against whom the rebellion was raised.

Though successful in his schemes, ill-feelings lurked in the bosom of the newly elected Khalif, who was anxious to secure the succession for his son Yazid, and he resolved to rid himself of an enemy whose near relationship to the Prophet attached the people to his person, while the meekness and gentleness of his disposition made amends for the absence of those traits of boldness and vigour which are so highly esteemed in a land where every one was a warrior from his youth, and where the sword and the bow graced the bosom alike of the stripling of a few summers, as of the venerable elder with snow white locks.

Sad to relate, Muauwya found an instrument to secure the accomplishment of his treacherous design in the sanctuary of the domestic circle, and the person selected to rid the world of an inoffensive and unsuspecting victim, was no other than the wife of Hasan's bosom, who, lured with the dazzling prospect of an ultimate union with Yazid, and tempted with the promise of a sum of 50,000 dirhams (somewhat over £1,000), readily consented to sacrifice the life of her lord and master. The method which she adopted for its accomplishment was not less remarkable than the consummate perfidy of the design. While yet warm from her embraces, she rubbed the body of her husband with a napkin which she had previously impregnated with poison. The deadly preparation quickly pervaded the frame of her hapless spouse, who soon lay stretched on the bed a stiffened and distorted corpse.

When the time of his death drew near, his brother Husain begged of him to say who it was that had poisoned him, and swore that judgment should overtake the murderer. But the noble-hearted Hasan refused to disclose the secret. "O brother! the life of this world is made up of nights which vanish away. *Let him alone till he and I meet together before God,*"

was the only response which passed the lips of the murdered saint; but the expression indicated a consciousness that, in his opinion, his wife, though the instrument, was not the instigator of his death.

When Muawiya heard the glad tidings of his enemy's murder, that ambitious and unprincipled intriguer fell down on his knees with affected humility, and worshipped the Lord of Heaven, who had removed from his path the sole opponent whom he dreaded in his heart, and hated in his soul. It is at least satisfactory in the midst of this black record of treachery and guilt to find that Yazid, more prudent perhaps than honourable, refused to fulfil the promise made in his name and on his behalf. So the murderess, whose memory is to this day bitterly execrated, and her person most deeply detested, remained a widow, while the paltry sum of money which she received as the price of a husband's blood was but an insignificant reward for an act of villainy which has few parallels in the annals of infamy and crime.

Thus (Safa, A.H. 49—March, A.D. 670) died the ex-Khalif, familiarly known as Abu Muhammad, though not a few love to speak of him as Taqqi (the Pious), which latter name he derived from the many actions by which he was distinguished. Before his death, Hasan had expressed a wish that he might be interred at Madina by the side of the Prophet of Islam; but the jealousy of the implacable Ayisha prevented compliance with this desire, and an ordinary cemetery afforded the grandson of Muhammad that peace and rest in the grave of death which the implacable malignity of his foes denied him when alive, as an Earthly monarch and Ruler of men.

### III.—HUSAIN.

It had been part of the agreement between Muawiya and Hasan that, after the decease of the former the government should revert to the family of the latter :



but as years rolled on, the usurper was by no means willing that the reins of power should pass from his own branch, and he took steps to make the succession hereditary : he was successful in his efforts, and on his death (A.H. 60—A.D. 680) his son Yazid sat on the throne of his father ; not only so, indeed, but for fourteen generations the Khalifat remained in the Ommaiya branch to which Muawiya had belonged. But the whole of these successors of the Prophet are regarded by the followers of Ali as usurpers, and are therefore excluded from the list of Imams with whose history these pages are concerned.

As soon as Yazid succeeded to the government, he sent a letter to the Governor of Madina, bidding him hold Husain and others "close to the inauguration, without any remission or relaxation." But the grandson of the Prophet managed, with various excuses, to put off the evil day when he would have had to bow down to a sovereign whose succession he disputed, and whose authority he ignored ; moreover, during this interval he managed to steal away secretly and escape to Mecca, taking with him the whole of his family except one brother.

Never were people more overjoyed than were the inhabitants of Iraq at the death of Muawiya, whom they detested as a tyrant and usurper, while they sighed for the government of Husain, who belonged to a family which they considered as almost divine ; added to which his wife was the daughter of the last Sassanide King of Persia. The Kufans, in particular, were so impatient, that they sent message after message to Ali's son, assuring him that if he would but make his appearance amongst them, he should not only be secure as to his own person, but that, in consideration of the esteem which they had for his father and family, they would render him homage, and acknowledge him as the only lawful and true Khalif. Though lending a ready ear to these solicitations and importunities, he none the less *deemed it prudent to despatch a messenger to feel the*

pulse of the people, whose humour he somewhat mistrusted. Muslim, the person selected for this delicate and important office, at first met with great encouragement, and no less than 18,000 men flocked to the standard of his master Husain : but the lieutenant of Yazid soon found means to turn the tide of popular favour, and the hapless envoy was eventually forced to flee for his life : being ere long seized at the house of an old woman, and taken back to the city, he was afterwards carried to the top of the castle, where he was decapitated and his head and mangled body cast down on the plain beneath ; which done, the former was picked up and sent as a present to Yazid.

When the messengers did not return, it should have been evident to Husain that something was amiss, and he might well have paused ere committing himself to the mercies of such a fickle and inconstant people : but he still persisted in his intention. To no effect did his friends represent to him the madness of embarking in such a desperate undertaking, suggesting that he should keep himself retired till a sufficient body of supporters was raised to ensure success. Husain was not to be moved from his intention : at length, finding all their protestations of no effect, they earnestly pressed him at least not to take the wives and children of his household, lest evil should befall them. One zealous counselor, in his eager efforts to avert a destruction which he foresaw, swore " By that God, beside whom there is no other, if I knew that my taking you by the hair of the head till they came in and parted us, would be a means to detain you at Mecca, I would do it." To use the quaint words of the Arabian author who has chronicled these events, " No advice took place with Husain," who on the morning of the eighth day of Zu'l hijja in the year of the Hijra 60 (10 September, A.D. 680), set out from Mecca with a small retinue of followers. This little cavalcade had not proceeded far on their road, when they fell in with a body of a thousand horse, under the *command* of a chieftain named al Hurr, a

man well affected to the family of Ali. To him Husain explained the object of the expedition which had been taken at the invitation of the people of Kufa ; charged with the commission to bring before Obaidu'llah the Governor of Bussora as a prisoner the very man who now stood before him powerless to resist, al Hurr was moved with compassion, and bade the grandson of the Prophet choose his own road : " Perhaps it may please God I may meet with something that may bring me off without my being enforced to any extremity upon your account," was the pious ejaculation of a warrior who dreaded that the blood of so near a descendant of the Apostle of God should be laid to his account. So, wheeling his charger, he departed out of the way, leaving Husain to pursue his journey unmolested. Scarce a few hours elapsed when four horsemen appeared in sight bringing the news that the nobility of the fickle city whither Husain was wending his steps, were opposed to him to a man, while as for the rest " their hearts are with you, but to-morrow their swords will be drawn against you." He now, too, learned for the first time the fate of the messenger which had been despatched to the town : the murder of this man affected him deeply, but did not deter him from continuing his march. Another faded blossom was added to the chaplet of destruction. In the still solitude of night he saw in a vision a horseman who said, " Men travel by night, and their destinies travel by night towards them ;" from this he knew that the hand of death was upon him, but onward he went till they came to the fatal plain of Karbala, where a large force was drawn up commanded by Amr, a general acting in the interests of Obaidu'llah, the Governor of Bussora. A conference now took place between the two armies, but it was productive of no material results. After it became evident that it was not possible to accommodate matters in this fashion, Obaidu'llah sent one Shimar to the commander *of the forces* with orders that if Husain and his followers *would surrender* themselves they should be received, but

if not that he should fall upon them, and trample them under foot.

This offer of mercy reached Husain on the ninth of the month Muharram, as he was sitting at the door of his tent, just at the close of evening prayer, whereupon he begged that he might be allowed till morn to consider as to the answer he would return. In the night his sister came up to her brother with tears in her eyes from a foreboding of evil. "Alas for the desolation of my family!" such were her piteous cries. "I wish I had died yesterday rather than have lived till to-day: my mother Fatima is dead, and my father Ali, and my brother Hasan. Alas for the destruction that is past, and the dregs of it that remain behind." Husain looking upon the frail creature at his side began to chide her, saying, "Sister, do not let the devil take away your temper." Unable to influence him, or deter him from the fatal course upon which he had embarked, the hapless maiden, beating her face, and tearing open her bosom, fell at his feet motionless in a swoon. Hastily sprinkling his sister with cold water, till she had somewhat recovered, Husain counselled her to "put her trust in God, and depend upon the comfort that comes from Him: and know that the people of the earth shall die, and the people of the Heavens shall not remain: and every thing shall perish but the presence of God, who created all things by His power, and shall make them return, and they shall return to him alone. My father was better than I, and my mother was better than I, and my brother was better than I, and I, and they, and every Musalman has an example in the Apostle of God." Leading away the terrified girl to her own apartments, he commanded his men to cord the tents close together so that the enemy might not be able to pass between them: he also caused a trench to be digged at the end of the line of tents, into which they threw a large quantity of wood, so that when set on fire it would be impossible for their foes to encompass them *from that direction*. The rest of the night was

spent in prayer and supplication, and as the morn began to dawn, both sides prepared for battle ; but the disproportion of the contending parties left no room for doubt as to the issue of the day ; for while Amr was at the head of upwards of 4,000 men, Husain's band could muster no more than two-and-thirty horse-soldiers; and forty men on foot—a total of seventy-two devoted adherents. So soon as it became evident that a struggle was imminent, Husain went into his tent, and, as is customary amongst the Arabs when about to engage in dangerous and forlorn enterprises, perfumed his body with musk, an example followed by the leading men of his party. The reason of this quaint proceeding showed at once the desperate nature of the adventure in which the martyrs of Islam were about to hazard their lives, and their firm belief in the future of the cause for which they were ready to fight. "Alas!" such was the explanation which one of their number vouchsafed to an inquiring comrade, "there is nothing between us and the black-eyed girls (of Paradise) but only that these people come down upon us and kill us." Then Husain mounted his horse, and Quran in hand, invited the people to the performance of their duty ; adding "O God! thou art my confidence in every trouble, and my hope in all adversity." He next reminded them of his excellency, the nobility of his birth, the greatness of his power, and his high descent, bidding them consider "whether or no such a man as I am is not better for you : I, who am the son of your Prophet's daughter, beside whom there is no other upon the face of the earth."

While this parley was going on in front of the tent, a party of thirty horse wheeled round, as if to commence the attack. They were commanded by al Hurr, who had resolved to throw in his lot with the grandson of the Prophet. So, drawing in rein before the master whom he had elected to serve, he placed at the disposal of the latter the band which had come forth *with the apparent design* of hurling destruction upon

their adversaries. His submission accepted, al Hurr turned his charger towards the tents of his former friends, whom he reproached most bitterly for their treachery and perfidy. "Alas for you! you invited him till he came, and then deceived him; and this did not satisfy you, but you are come out to fight against him. Nay, you have hindered him, and his wives, and his family, from the waters of the Euphrates, where Jews, and Christians, and Sabians drink, and hogs, and dogs, sport themselves, and he is like a prisoner in your hands incapable of doing himself either good or hurt." But an arrow from the bow of Shimar put a summary end to all controversy, and the battle began in good earnest. Two warriors now stepped forth from the ranks of the Kufian army, and challenged their adversaries to single combat; but their bodies soon lay prostrate in the dust at the feet of a victorious champion from amidst Husain's little band, who slew them both in the presence of the two armies. Nor was the next who offered himself more fortunate: coming up close to the grandson of the Prophet, he muttered in the ear of the latter, words of bitterness and gall. "You are first at Hell," said the arrogant Kufian warrior. "By no means," was the rejoinder; "alas for thee, I go to a merciful Lord full of forgiveness, easy to be obeyed, but thou art more worthy of Hell." The Syrian soldier turned about, but at this instant his horse became unmanageable, and he fell off, leaving his foot hanging in the stirrup: seeing his plight, one of Husain's party stepped forth and lopped off the cavalier's right leg. Powerless and mutilated the poor wretch was dragged along the stones and his head dashed to pieces ere his friends could stop the horse in its mad career. Emboldened by these successes, the Imam's champions fought with redoubled energy, and not a soul from amongst the warriors of Kufa lived to return to the camp whence they had come forth to contend in single combat with the heroes of Karbala. In these circumstances, orders were given for a *general onslaught* on the desperate knot of followers

who had placed their swords and their lives at the disposal of the son of the "Lion of God." The fight raged thick and furious, but still Husain's party, whose superiority in courage made, in some degree, amends for their inferiority in numbers, managed to repulse the enemy at all points. Seeing this, the commander of their adversaries ordered 500 archers to the front. And in a few minutes such a rain of arrows poured down upon Husain's camp, that not a man of them could remain in the saddle. So leaping down, the martyrs fought sword in hand with a valour which nothing could withstand, and with an impetuosity which no living soul could oppose.

Amr perceiving that, thanks to the timely precaution of the Meccans, they were inaccessible save in the front, commanded his men to pull down the tents; but the soldiers told off for the duty were killed to a man. This so enraged the desperate Shimar, that, indifferent to all the rules of warfare, he struck his javelin into the tent which gave shelter to the women of Husain's household, and then, calling for a brand, proceeded to set fire to the slender house with its helpless and delicate inmates. The apostle's grandson, hearing the shrieks of the terrified females, and seeing at a glance what had occasioned their distress, was bitterly enraged.

"What!" said he, "would'st thou burn my family? God burn thee in hellfire!"

It was now noon, and the time of prayer; and in the midst of his troubles and danger Husain was not unmindful of the duties which his religion imposed upon every true son of Islam. So calling together the remnant of his shattered company, the Imam, poured forth to the God of heaven a petition for succour and aid, adding to the office the "Prayer of Fear," which is never used but in cases of extremity. After the devotions were finished, the fight was renewed with redoubled energy on both sides. Fatima's son soon found himself surrounded by his foes, but the prodigious *valour of his adherents*, one alone of whom slew ten men *as they pressed around him*, kept the enemy for a while

at bay ; still as soldier after soldier fell fighting like a hero, there was in the end no one left to fill the gaps. The little party was now almost cut off, while Husain's eldest son lay mangled at his feet, surrounded by the lifeless and quivering frames of many a stalwart warrior who, faithful even unto death, had "done and dared" all that mortal man could do. The Imam himself had throughout the day been in the thickest of the fight ; arrows had poured round him on every side ; swords had clashed before his eyes, and javelins had pierced the heart of many of his followers at his very feet ; but the Martyr of Karbala seemed to possess a charmed life, and he stood on the field of battle as yet unharmed and unhurt. At length, however, the spell was broken, and the blow of a sabre clove his skull, so that his head-piece became filled with the blood which gushed forth from the wound. Casting aside the helmet which pressed his temples, he bound up his head with a turban, and continued the fight ; but he soon became exhausted, so, sick in heart, and weary in body, he sat down at the door of the tent, taking in his lap his little son Abdu'llah ; yet scarce had he cast the eyes of fond affection upon the innocent face which he loved with all the deepness of a tender and compassionate nature, than an arrow pierced the heart of the hapless infant, who fell on his breast a blood-stained stiffening corpse. Placing his hands beneath the wound to catch the blood which flowed in copious streams, the agonized father threw it forth towards the skies, ejaculating at the time, "O Lord ! if thou withholdest help from us from heaven, give it to those that are better, and take vengeance upon the wicked." Husain now became thirsty, but while in the act of drinking, an arrow entered his mouth, and he sunk to the earth with hands uplifted, imploring that help which man could now no longer afford. At this juncture his little nephew, a beautiful child with jewels in his ears, came to embrace him ; but a ruthless soldier cut off the lad's hand with a sword ; whereupon, roused by the sight of this stripling,



mangled before his very eyes, the infuriated uncle, hastily muttering, "Thy reward, child, is with God; thou shalt go to thy pious forefathers," rushed once more into the ranks of the enemy, and hurled death and destruction in every direction—charging sometimes to the left, sometimes to the right, till his foes fled in every direction like deer before a lion. The effect was visible and the deed heroic; but such forlorn desperation could avail nothing against the seething phalanx of the enmaddened foe, who by mere force of numbers were able to strike the undaunted swordsman a blow on the hand which partially disabled him. A second cut on the neck brought him to the ground, where, as he lay, a spear was thrust into his heart. So fell the noble and much loved Husain, the third Imam of the house of Ali. The remorseless victors, indifferent alike to the claims of humanity as of decency, gloated over the corpse with the malignity of fiends, and severing the head from the body, rode their horses over the mangled carcase already scarred with three-and-thirty wounds which it had received in the battle, till a quivering and scarce recognizable mass of flesh was all that remained of the hero whose praises poets delight to sing, and whose prowess has seldom been equalled, never surpassed, in the annals of a nation, ever "prone for the fight and eager for the fray."

A hardened wretch from amongst the hardened knot of ruffians who had not shrunk from an act of barbarity which has consigned its perpetrators to eternal infamy and disgrace, seizing the head of the martyred Imam, hastened with the sickening charge to Obaidu'llah, the governor of Bussora. Finding, however, the castle shut, he carried home the blood-stained trophy to his house, and told his wife that he had brought her a great rarity. But the woman was moved with compassion at a sight so revolting to the better feelings of a tender nature. "Other men make presents of gold and silver, *and you* have brought me the head of the son of the *Apostle's* daughter. By God! the same bed shall never

hold us two any more." Such was the indignant protest of the incensed matron, who thereupon quitted the house of a man whose baseness she had learned to despise, and whose conduct she was fain to loathe. Next morning the head was taken to the governor, who treated it reproachfully, and struck it over the mouth with a stick, after which it was set up in Kufa, and subsequently carried about the streets of that city. In due course it was sent to Yazid, at Damascus; but the Khalif was moved at the ghastly sight, and expressed his regret at Husain's murder. As to the ultimate restingplace of the head there is considerable difference of opinion. Some say it was sent to Madina and buried by the side of the tomb of Fatima, the mother of Husain; others incline to the view that it was interred at Damascus, in a place called the Garden Gate, whence it was eventually removed to Askalon, its last restingplace being at Cairo, where a monument was erected called the "Sepulchre of Husain the Martyr." Again, some pretend that the head was interred at Karbala, and it is certainly significant that a sumptuous monument is erected at that city, which is visited to this day with great respect by devotees from Persia and other regions in which the "family of the tent" are venerated, and their memories revered.

As regards the mutilated corpse of Husain, it lay exposed on the sands of the plain for the space of three days, when the people of a neighbouring village, fearing lest they should incur the vengeance of heaven if they suffered the bodies of their fellow creatures to be longer a prey to wolves and vultures, went together and committed to earth on the spot where they found it the headless and scarce recognizable carcase of the grandson of the Prophet of Arabia.

The two titles usually given to Husain in Persia, are that of "Shahid" (the martyr,) or that of "Sayyid" (Lord), while both he and his brother Hasan are comprehended in the dual word "as Sayyidain," which signifies "the two Lords." He was killed on the tenth

day of the month of Muharram in the year of the Hijra 61, which corresponds with 19 Oct. A.D. 680, an anniversary religiously observed by the myriads of pious worshippers who annually celebrate the memory and mourn the death of the Martyrs of Karbala."

#### IV.—ALI ASGHAR, surnamed ZAINU'L ABIDIN.

When Husain lay slain on the fatal field of Karbala on that memorable day in the month of Muharram, a soldier entering the tent of the martyred hero, found therein a young lad languishing in pain and sickness. Snatching from the midst of the screaming assembly of women, the innocent and defenceless stripling, who alone of all "the family of the tent" had escaped the massacre, the bigoted warrior, his soul deadened to all the better feelings of humanity, drew his sword to quench the flame of life which flickered in the bosom of the unfortunate youth: but a more sympathizing bystander, attracted by the shrieks which issued from the tent, reproached his comrade for his want of manliness in butchering a beardless child. "The believers," said he, "have hitherto abstained from killing the infant children even of infidels; let this child be carried to thy general that he may decide upon his fate," So the life of Ali Asghar, better known perhaps as Zainu'l Abidin, was spared, and he was led away captive to the presence of Obaidu'llah. At the time of the lad's arrival the Governor was busied in mocking and insulting the head of the massacred Husain; but turning suddenly in the midst of his fiendish triumph towards the new object of his aversion he jeeringly observed to the youthful prisoner that it was understood that God had slain his father. To this brutal remark the proud youth vouchsafed no reply, whereupon the merciless tormentor impetuously

demanded the reason of such silence. "I once had an elder brother, but him also the murderers have slain," was the undismayed rejoinder.

The rage of the tyrant was easily roused, and he bid his attendants fall upon the boy and despatch him : at this critical juncture Zairab, the daughter of Ali, in company with the women of Husain's family, rushing forward, implored him to spare the only representative of their wretched race, and if the victor was not yet satisfied with blood, to direct his vengeance rather against themselves, since they had no one left to whom he could be accountable. Their entreaties prevailed, and the order for this last act of savage butchery was countermanded ; so for the second time the child's life was spared. The whole party were now despatched to Damascus, but the malignity of the captor is evidenced by the circumstance that the women were stripped of their clothing, and paraded through the streets exposed to the insults of a pitiless and insulting rabble ! The noble soul of the youthful prisoner resented this wanton act of cruelty, and he would not vouchsafe a word to his attendants, as with a chain about his neck he journeyed along in the silence of despair. Coming to the presence of the Imam Yazid, the party experienced scarcely better treatment than they had received at the hands of his lieutenant. First of all the Emperor of the Faithful proceeded in a strain of insult to reproach Ali Asghar with the misfortunes and troubles which seemed to pursue the destinies of himself, and of the family to which he belonged. On receiving from him a reply equally modest and applicable, the baffled ruler bade his son take up the discourse, if haply he might be able to incense and irritate the captive before him. The youth, however, refused to listen to the brutal commands of his father, who after sufficiently indulging his malevolent spirit turned to exhaust his spleen upon the noble minded Zainab, endeavouring to aggravate her sorrows by addressing her under the title of the daughter of the Prophet's son-in-law, and thereby

bringing to her recollection the exalted stock from which she was sprung.

When their souls had been tortured as long as he thought proper by the remarks to which, in the insolence of his power, the Imam thus compelled them to submit, he at length dismissed the captives to the apartments of his women. There they remained several days, at the expiration of which they received instructions to betake themselves to Madina. Before, however, their final departure, Yazid desired that Ali Asghar might be brought to the royal presence to receive his dismissal. The language to which the lad was compelled to submit was somewhat more gentle than might have been expected at the hands of a man who did not hesitate to stoop to the most contemptible means to vex and distress the unfortunate and hapless beings whom fate had placed in his power. "The curse of God light on thee, thou descendant of the Prophet's son-in-law! Had it rested with myself I might have been disposed to subscribe to the views of thy father; but it becomes not man to controvert the decrees of Providence; thou art now at liberty to return to Madina with the whole of thy family."

The person to whose care Yazid had committed the party of fugitives conducted himself with such civility and respect to them all the way that Fatima said to her sister Zainab, "Sister, this Syrian hath behaved himself so kindly to us, do not you think we ought to make him a present?" "Alas," was the rejoinder, "we have nothing to present him withal but our jewels." So they took off their bracelets, and sent them to the man, with an apology, begging of him to accept them as a token of their respect for his courtesy. He, however, modestly refused the proffered gift, generously representing, "If what I have done had been only with regard to this world, a less price than your jewels had been a sufficient reward; but what I did was for God's sake, and upon the account of your relation to the Prophet, God's peace be upon him!"

When Ali Asghar arrived at Madina he was welcomed with enthusiasm as the sole survivor left to perpetuate the race of the Martyr of Karbala : the adherents, indeed, of the house of Ali soon formed a large and influential party, which endeavoured, on all occasions, to magnify the merits of Husain, in preferring an honourable death to an ignominious life. By this means they contrived to stir up the people to such a pitch of enthusiasm that the latter threw off the yoke of the house of Ommaiya, and Islam presented the strange spectacle of a divided alliance, Yazid ruling at Damascus, while the followers of the martyrs of Karbala possessed power and influence at Madina. For a while, however, the Aliites hesitated formally to refuse homage to the Ruler of the Faithful, who was passing his days in the Syrian capital, drinking wine, and minding nothing "but his tabors, his singing wenches, and his dogs ;" but after an interval they broke out into open rebellion, and, repairing to the mosque, publicly renounced their allegiance. "I lay aside Yazid as I lay aside this turban," said a lad amongst the number, as, suiting the action to the word, he cast his head dress to the ground. "I put away Yazid as I put away this shoe," rejoined another, and soon a great heap of shoes and turbans proclaimed the fact that the reveller at Damascus held no sway at Madina. An army was quickly despatched to reduce the rebels to obedience, but the Aliites excavated a ditch round about the city, and made a most vigorous defence : in spite of their valour they were ultimately, however, overpowered, and for three days the city was given over as a prey to the soldiers of the conquering general. Ali Asghar, contrary to what might have been expected, was treated with the greatest respect, and escaped the general massacre of those who had hoped to re-establish the fortunes of his ill-destined house. So soon as Madina was subjected, Yazid turned his attention to Mecca, which city also exhibited signs of disaffection ; but while the siege was at its height the hand of death struck down the Imam in his revels

(4 Rabi'ul awal A.H. 64—1 Nov. A.D. 682) and the holy city escaped the destruction which had been impending.

At this time the people of Kufa, bethinking themselves that they had not dealt generously with Husain, began to take steps to avenge his death upon his murderers. Accordingly circular letters were sent bidding those who were favourable to the cause to meet on the plain of Naqila, to show that they repented, and that they were "persons duly qualified for the search of excellency, and the laying hold of the reward, and repentance towards their Lord from their sin, though it be the cutting off their necks, and the killing their children, and the consumption of their wealth, and the destruction of their tribes and families." Scarce a handful of persons responded to the call, and even when two messengers had repaired to Kufa crying in the streets, "Vengeance for Husain," no more than 4,000 men could be found willing to embark upon a venture fraught with so much danger and peril. Marching all night, the little band in the morning came to Husain's burying-place, where they remained till each man of their number had prayed for pardon over the tomb of the Martyr of Karbala. "O Lord!" thus ran the language of penitence and remorse, "we have deceived the son of the daughter of our Prophet: forgive us what is past and repent towards us, for thou art the Repenter, the Merciful! Have mercy upon Husain and his followers, the righteous martyrs! and we call thee to witness O Lord! that we are the very same sort of men with those that were killed for his sake; if Thou dost not forgive him to us we must be sufferers." So soon as the party had finished their devotions they continued their journey towards Syria with the design of revenging themselves on Obaidu'llah, who had caused the blood of the martyrs to flow in streams on the plain of Karbala; but that "wicked wretch" met them on the way with an army of upwards of 20,000 men, and scarce a soul of the Aliites lived to mourn over the *rashness of endeavouring* with but a handful of zealots

to withstand the attack of a body of troops so vastly superior in numbers and organization. While these reverses were overtaking the hapless followers of Ali on the plains of Syria, a terrible revenge was being wreaked upon the Khalif at Mecca., It happened thus : a man, by name Al Mukhtar had been struck with a cane by Obaidu'llah at the time the messengers from Husain were endeavouring to stir up the people of Kufa to declare for the grandson of the Prophet of Arabia ; the violence of the blow dashed the man's eye to pieces : filled with rage, the mutilated servant swore with a solemn oath that he would take vengeance on the man who had at once insulted and injured him. Being cast into prison the poor wretch found, at first, but little opportunity to put his oath into execution, though he managed at times to get letters conveyed to him in the lining of his cap ; but so soon as he was released he set about the task which he had taken upon himself, and by means of indomitable energy and perseverance at length managed to secure the command of such forces as the power of Ali could muster together. Indeed, some of the party went so far as to proclaim him Khalif on condition that he would not only govern according to the contents of the Book of God, and the tradition of his Apostle, but destroy the murderers of Husain. Nothing loth, at any rate, as to the last condition, Al Mukhtar seized and killed Shimar, the man who had shot the first arrow on the memorable day of massacre on the field of Karbala. He next besieged in his house the brutal wretch who had carried Husain's head to Obaidu'llah, and when he had killed this contemptible miscreant, he burned the body to ashes and cast them to the winds of heaven. Amr, who had commanded the army sent out against Husain, met the same fate as had befallen the martyr whom he had slain, and his lifeless carcase was trampled under the foot of horses in like manner as, by his command, troops had ridden over the sacred body of the grandson of the Prophet. Another offender was bound and handed over to his



tormentors to be treated as they might think proper. "You stripped the son of Ali before he was dead," such were the taunts of the captors, "and we will strip you alive: you made a mark of him, and we will make one of you;" so they let fly a shower of arrows at him which "stuck so thick over all parts of his body that he looked like a porcupine."

But fortune had reverses in store at this juncture for the house of Ali, some of whom were seized while performing the pilgrimage to Mecca, and imprisoned in the holy well "Zamzam." Whilst in this sorry plight they found means to make their condition known to Al Mukhtar, who at once despatched 750 troopers to their assistance, in batches of from forty to one hundred men. These soldiers arriving at Mecca, beat off the guard, and breaking open the "Zamzam," released the imprisoned captives. Al Mukhtar now (A.H. 67=A.D. 686) found leisure to attack the city of Kufa, on which occasion he adopted an expedient as original as it was successful: making a throne, he pretended that there was something mysterious connected therewith; accordingly it was carried into battle upon a mule, and the people, ere the contest began, knelt down before the sacred emblem and prayed for protection against their enemies. The petition was granted, and Kufa fell into the hands of a general who, filled with the bitterest animosity against the race of Ommaiya persecuted all the inhabitants well disposed towards that cause; but the severity of his actions, and the disorders of his administration, raised enemies within the city, and these lending their assistance to the army which was sent to wrest the town from its captor, the latter was slain, while the whole of his followers, to the number of 7,000 men were put to the sword. Thus died Al Mukhtar—but he had lived to fulfil his oath, and wreak his vengeance upon all those who had dipped their hands in the blood of Husain, 50,000 of whom paid with their lives the penalty of their treachery and cruelty on the *occasion of the tragedy at Karbala.*

What part Zainu'l Abidin took in the struggles of his followers to establish the authority and consolidate the power of the house of the "Family of the Tent," is not stated in any of the Arabian annalists who have detailed the events of the period. But he appears to have exercised, at least in name, the powers of Imam, for it is related that Muhammad Hanifa, a son of Ali by another wife, and therefore not a descendant of the Prophet, contended with him at one time for the sacred honours of the Khalifat, and insisted that the arms of the Lawgiver of Arabia should be consigned to himself as the nearest descendant of the son-in-law of Muhammad. It was determined to refer the claims to the decision of the "Black Stone" in the Temple of Mecca, which pious Muslims suppose to be one of the relics which our first parent was suffered to bring with him on his expulsion from Paradise. Accordingly, the competitors presented themselves before this celebrated monument of antiquity; the son of Hanifa first addressed his prayer that some testimony might be revealed in favour of his claims; but not a sound was heard to establish his rights, or confirm his pretensions. Zainu'l Abidin next proceeded to invoke the sacred stone, by the truth of that Being from whom it derived its miraculous properties, to pronounce which of them after Husain should be Imam. The stone, so runs the legend, thereupon declared in favour of Ali, the great grandson of the Prophet, who was accordingly invested with the dignity of which his uncle had sought to deprive him—a dignity which he retained for the rest of his days.

Regarding the date of Ali Asghar's decease there is a considerable difference of opinion, some contending that it occurred in the 75th year of the Hijra (A.D. 694), while others maintain that it did not take place till twenty years later.

Nor is there less uncertainty as to the cause of his death, which is generally attributed to poison administered at the instance of an Imam of the house of Ommayya to

whom it may be supposed his presence was at once a source of annoyance and of danger.

He was buried at Madina near the tomb of his uncle Hasan.

This Imam is commonly known as Zainu'l Abidin, "the ornament of the servants of God," an epithet occasionally varied to Shaidu'l Abidin, "the sun of the servants of God." He is also at times, referred to by the appellation of "Sajjad," the "ever prostrate or adoring;" while the name which he not infrequently receives of Zu'l tanafat, takes its origin from the callosities on his hands and knees, resembling those of a camel; these it is said, were contracted by his unremitting assiduity in the acts of devotion. His other titles, of Abu Muhammad, and Abu'l Hasan, simply indicate that he was the father of children bearing those names. The nick name of Abu'l Qasim, "parent of liberality," may well be supposed to have been derived from his extensive charity, a virtue which endeared him in the eyes of a nation with whom generosity is a sacred duty, and hospitality a cherished privilege.

#### V.—MUHAMMAD ABU ZAINU'L ABIDIN, surnamed MUHAMMAD BAQIR.

Respecting the fifth Imam, Muhammad Baqir, but little is recorded in the pages of history. He was born at Madina in the seventy-fifth year of the Hijra (A.D. 694), or as others say in the year 59 of that era (A.D. 658) his mother having been Omru Abdu'llah, a daughter of Hasan; he was therefore a great great grandson of the Prophet. He died in the year 114 of the same era (A.D. 732) by poison administered at the instance of the then reigning Khalif, and was buried at Madina.

The surname of Baqir, which means "abounding in knowledge," was given him in consequence of the great extent of his learning and the vast depth of his information. *He is* sometimes also designated by the title of

Shakir (the grateful), in consequence of his habit of thanking God on all occasions of life, while the name of Hadi, which is sometimes to be met with, signifies that he was a guide or director to watch the steps of the people committed to his care. The title Abu Jafir simply indicates that he was the father of the succeeding Imam who bore the name of Jafir.

#### VI.—JAFARU'S SADIQ.

Imam Jafaru's Sadiq was born at Madina in the year 83 of the Muhammadan era (A.D. 702), his mother having been a daughter of the son of the first Khalif Abu Bakr. According to the Orientals he was the possessor of every virtue and perfection that can exalt fallen humanity or ennoble its erring instincts; and if their testimony be entitled to credit, he appears to have been so well persuaded of his own transcendent powers, that he used to tell his followers to embrace every opportunity to urge him with their inquiries while he was within their reach, seeing that when he was gone there would be none to supply his place as an instructor and director of mankind! He died in the year A.H. 148 (A.D. 765) by poison, at the age of sixty-five, the only member of his race who was suffered to reach that comparatively advanced period of life. He was buried at Madina by the side of his predecessor. There are those who maintain that some time previous to his death Jafaru's Sadiq nominated his son Musa to the Imamatus, to the prejudice of his elder brother Ismail, whom he thought proper to disinherit in consequence of his intemperate love of wine. Others, however, are of opinion that Ismail having died previous to his father, the succession devolved as a matter of course upon Musa as the next in seniority. Hence arose a schism amongst the advocates of the Imamatus, the Ismailians, of whom a branch exists to this day on the western side of India, ascribing to the person from whom they are so

denominated, the seventh place in the succession of the Rulers of the Faithful. It is, moreover, the belief of this latter sect that their founder was the last of his race, and that the sacred office which he held expired with him, a doctrine of which they availed themselves to indulge in the grossest impiety and atheism. Jafaru's Sadiq (Ja'far the sincere), derives his title from the rectitude of his life, and the pureness of his devotions, while the designation Abu Abdu'llah, which is sometimes to be found in the pages of history, indicates that he was the father of a son bearing the name of Abdu'llah.

#### VII.—MUSAU'L KAZIM.

It is generally believed that the birth of Imam Musa took place at a small station between Mecca and Madina in the year of the Hijra 128 (A.D. 745), his mother having been a native of Barbary. Owing to the unfortunate circumstance that he had excited the jealousy of the celebrated Khalif Harun ar Rashid, who ruled over the destinies of the faithful A.D. 786–808, he was summoned to Baghdad by that Prince, and cast into prison, where he remained till his decease in the year 183 (A.D. 799). The cause of his death is variously stated, some being of opinion that the poisoned chalice so fatal to the members of his race, was the means employed to rid the world of a dangerous rival, while others incline to the view that the more barbarous method was adopted of pouring molten lead down the unhappy Imam's throat. He was buried in one of the suburbs of Baghdad. The appellation of Khazim takes its origin in the extreme clemency, combined with a wonderful power of restraining his anger, with which this Imam was gifted. But he is sometimes referred to as Salim (patient), and at others as Amin, which latter *epithet* indicates that he is the trusty guardian of the *Faith and Tradition*.

VIII.—ALI RIZA.

The birth of Ali Riza is said to have taken place at Madina in the year 148 of the Muhammadan era (A.D. 765). Of his life and actions nothing has been handed down to posterity, and even his decease is surrounded by a halo of obscurity and doubt, it being uncertain whether he died a natural death, or whether he was destroyed by a dish of poisoned grapes. All that is known for certain is the date of the occurrence, which happened in A.H. 203 (A.D. 818). He was buried at Tus, which city subsequently became known as Mashhad Ali, or sometimes Mashhad, a name signifying "place of martyrdom." Ali Riza appears to have been a man much esteemed for his abstinence, and for his assiduity in prayer; his memory is indeed at the present day much revered amongst the people of Persia, who hold that a visit to his shrine is as meritorious as eighty pilgrimages to Mecca; but this regard for the virtues of the departed saint does not appear to be shared by all those professing the faith of the Prophet of Arabia, for it is a tradition that when the golden "gumbuz" or Mausoleum, which covers the remains and perpetuates the fame of the Martyr of Mashhad, was erected by Nadir Shah, King of Persia (A.D. 1736 to A.D. 1747) the Wahhabi Arabs sent a sarcastic message to that sovereign to the effect that the treasure which he was expending on so useless a fabric would be much more meritoriously applied if bestowed to superior advantage upon themselves. The title of "Riza," signifies "resigned;" this Imam is, too, occasionally, designated Mortaza—the approved.

IX.—MUHAMMAD TAQI.

Imam Muhammad Taqi, born at Madina in the 195th year of the Hijra (A.D. 810), is said to have been possessed of such unrivalled endowments of person

and mind, that the Khalif al Mamun, won by the Imam's attractions, gave the latter a royal daughter in marriage. Notwithstanding, however, this exalted connection he did not escape the fate of his predecessors, and in A.H. 220 (A.D. 835), when he had attained but twenty-five years, the poisoned bowl terminated a career which had commenced under such favourable auspices. He was buried near Baghdad by the side of his grandfather Musau'l Kazim. He is sometimes designated Abu Jafar (the father of Jafar), but more generally "Taqi," the pious. The other titles by which he is known are "Jawad" (beneficent), "Munajib" (liberal), and "Mortaza" (approved).

#### X.—ALI BIN MUHAMMAD TAQI.

The birth of this venerated successor to the chair of the hierarchy is said to have taken place at Madina, about the year 212 of the Hijra era (A.D. 827). He spent, however, the greater part of his days at Samra, about four-and-twenty hours' journey from Baghdad, having been conducted to that town by order of the reigning Khalif. During his stay at the city in question he devoted himself to study and prayer, hoping thereby to avoid the jealousy of the Prince into whose hands he had fallen; but he failed, and once again poison put an end to the existence of an unfortunate member of the unfortunate house of Ali. This happened in A.H. 254 (A.D. 868). He was buried at Samra, and, as in the case of his father, obtained the title of "Taqi" (pious), although he has been occasionally designated Hadi (the guide). The epithet of "Askari" may be derived from the town of Askari in Samra, where he resided, though there are some who incline to the view that it is meant merely to denote that he was the "younger" (Asghar) Imam of the name Ali. The title "Zaki" (the continent) perpetuates his piety, while Abu'l Hasan serves to show that he was the father of the succeeding Imam.







*The Mahdi!*

## XI.—HASANU'L ASKARI.

The eleventh Imam was born at Madina in the year 232 of the Muhammadan era (A.D. 846). He has been much celebrated for his extensive liberality and his munificent disposition, while he is said to have evidenced by numerous proofs the possession of very extraordinary, if not miraculous powers. But these qualities caused him to be suspected by the reigning Khalif of the Abbasides, who adopted the usual mode of ridding himself of a person, whom he deemed dangerous. So Hasanu'l Askari shared the fate of those who had gone before him, and in the year 260 of the Hijra era (A.D. 873), a draught of poison carried off the eleventh Imam of the House of Ali. The titles he bore were Zaki (pure), Khalis (saviour), Siraj (lantern); the first marks the purity of his manners; the second was given him in the hope and expectation that he would deliver the Musulmans from the oppression of the Abbasides; while the third signifies that he illuminated the world by the light of his faith and doctrine. In common with his father, and probably for the same reason, he bears the appellation of Askari.

## XII.—ABU'L KASIM MUHAMMAD AL MAHDI.

This person, concerning whom the Orientals entertain some extraordinary beliefs, was born at Samra in the year of the Hijra era 255 (A.D. 868). His birth, so it is proclaimed, was accompanied with preternatural signs and peculiarities, while certain marks on his body testified that no ordinary mortal had been sent into the world. Of his life and career no information has been handed down, save that the Khalif at that time swaying the destinies of the Muslim Monarchy, having manifested some design against this Imam, who is known throughout the East as the Mahdi or "Pontiff," the latter made his escape in A.H. 266 (A.D. 879) into a vault or subterraneous excavation at Samra, and totally disappeared.

It is, however, an article of belief amongst an immense number of votaries that he is still living, and that, when the proper period shall arrive, he will again appear on earth and exercise sovereign sway ; and they have accordingly bestowed upon him the title of Hujjat (testimony), Qaim (erect), Muntazir (expector), Sahibu'z Zaman (the universal prince). Other sectaries again are not agreed whether the Mahdi is to be in the person of this prince, or of some other individual yet unborn, of the race of Fatima, who will come into the world in the consummation of time. The Ismailians, as has previously been stated, deem that Muhammad, the fourth son of Jafar, the tenth Imam, is the Mahdi who is destined to create a formidable revolution in the West, the regions of which will long continue in subjugation to him and to his posterity. Nor are there wanting persons who profess to believe that after he had disappeared the Mahdi continued to hold a mysterious communication with his adherents, through the intervention of certain individuals successively entrusted with his confidence, a state of things which terminated in the 326th year of the Hijra (A.D. 937), when one of the name of Ali bin Muhammad, the last who enjoyed this trust, produced, a short time before his death, a paper said to have been written by the invisible or concealed Imam, charging him to adjust all his concerns with this world, for that at the expiration of six days he was to die, a prediction which is supposed to have been verified. From that period the communications in question entirely ceased, and the existence of the twelfth Imam has remained enshrouded in a mist of obscurity, which no man has succeeded in removing. At his coming, an event which preludes the end of the world, it is supposed that he will be accompanied by Jesus Christ, who at his suggestion will kill all the swine appertaining to the followers of the Cross, and make Christianity similar to the religion of Islam, so that after this period the two faiths will be merged *into one homogeneous creed !*

## CHAPTER V.

## THE QURAN.

THE word Quran signifies in Arabic "the reading," or rather, "that which ought to be read." The syllable *Al* is only the Arabic article signifying *the*, and therefore ought to be omitted when the English article is prefixed.

The work is divided into 114 chapters, called "Suras," an epithet, properly signifying a row, order, or regular series; as a course of bricks in building, or a rank of soldiers in an army.

In the manuscript copies these chapters are not distinguished by their numerical order, but by particular titles, which (except that of the first, which is the initial sura, or introduction to the rest) are taken sometimes from a particular matter treated of, or person mentioned therein; but usually from the first word of note. Occasionally there are two or more titles, a peculiarity due to the difference of the copies.

Some of the chapters having been revealed at Mecca, and others at Madina, the explanation of this circumstance makes a part of the title; but several of the chapters are said to have been revealed partly at the former town, and partly at the latter; and as to others, it is yet a dispute among the commentators to which place of the two they belong.

Every chapter is subdivided into smaller portions, of very unequal length, customarily called verses; but the Arabic word is "*Ayat*," and signifies signs or wonders.

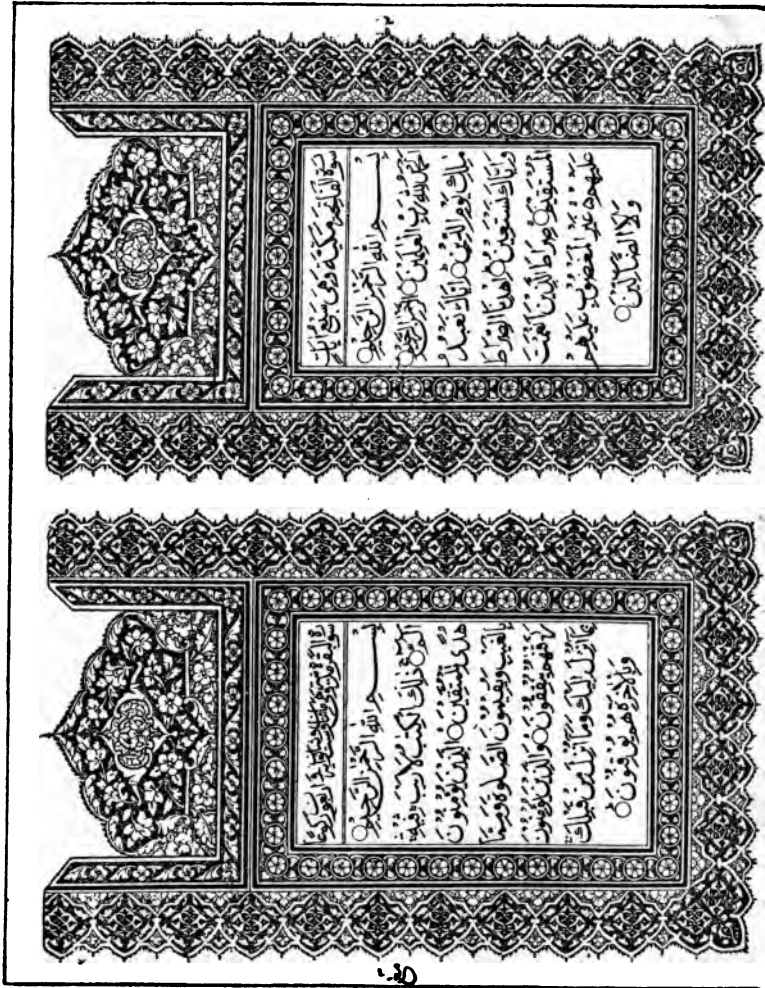
Notwithstanding this subdivision is common and well known, yet no manuscript exists wherein the verses are actually numbered ; though in some copies the total verses in each chapter is set down after the title. And the Muhammadans seem to have some scruple in making an actual distinction in their copies, because the chief disagreement between their several editions of the Quran consists in the division and number of the verses.

Besides these unequal divisions of chapter and verse, the Muhammadans have also divided the book into sixty equal portions which they call *Ahzab*, each again subdivided into four equal parts ; but the Quran is more usually apportioned into thirty sections, named *Ajza*, each of twice the length of the former, and in the like manner subdivided into four parts. These divisions are for the use of the readers in the royal temples, or in the adjoining chapels where the emperors and great men are interred. There are thirty of these readers belonging to every chapel, and each reads his section every day, so that the whole work is read over once a day.

Next after the title, at the head of every chapter, except only the ninth, is prefixed the following solemn form, by the Muhammadans called the Bismilla, "In the name of the most merciful GOD" ; which sentence they constantly place at the beginning of all their books and writings in general, as a peculiar mark or distinguishing characteristic of their religion, it being counted a sort of impiety to omit it.

This auspiciatory form, and also the titles of the chapters, are by the generality of the doctors and commentators believed to be of divine origin, no less than the text itself ; but the more moderate are of opinion they are only human additions, and not the very word of GOD.

Twenty-nine chapters have this peculiarity, that they begin with certain letters of the alphabet, some with a single one, others with more. These letters the *Muhammadans* believe to be the peculiar marks of the



Quran, and to conceal several profound mysteries, the certain understanding of which, the more intelligent confess, has not been communicated to any mortal, their prophet only excepted. Notwithstanding which, some take the liberty of guessing at their meaning, and suppose the letters to stand for as many words expressing the names and attributes of GOD, His works, ordinances, and decrees. Others explain the intent of these letters from their nature, or else from their value in numbers ; but in all probability their true meaning has yet to be found.

The Quran is universally allowed to be written with the utmost elegance and purity of language, in the dialect of the tribe of Quraish (the most noble and polite of all the Arabians), but with some mixture, though very rarely, of other dialects. It is confessedly the standard of the Arabic tongue, and as the more orthodox believe, and are taught by the book itself, inimitable by any human pen.

But it must not be overlooked that the rules of language have been made to conform to this venerated composition, and that, therefore, it cannot be otherwise than perfect, judged according to the canons of grammar and learning, of which it is itself the basis and substratum.

It is asserted by the Muslims that each Prophet who has appeared in the world, has performed miracles in that department of skill or science which flourished in his particular age ; thus, Moses was a magician, Jesus healed the sick, while Muhammad produced a work which, for its eloquence and beauty of diction, was unrivalled by any of the compositions of its time. This circumstance is deemed to stamp the Quran as having a divine origin, and indeed to this miracle, for such it is considered in Islam, Muhammad himself appealed for the confirmation of his mission, publicly challenging the most learned and gifted men of the day to produce a single chapter to compare with the book which he alleged God had whispered into his ear. The challenge *was accepted*, and a poem written by Labid Ibn Rabia,

one of the greatest wits in Arabia, being fixed up on the gate of the temple of Mecca, an honour allowed to none but the most esteemed performances, none of the other poets durst offer anything of their own in competition with it. But the second chapter of the Quran being placed by its side soon after, Labid himself (then an idolator) on reading the first verses only, was struck with admiration, and immediately professed the religion taught thereby, declaring that such words could only proceed from an inspired person.

That Muhammad's boast as to the literary excellence of the Quran was not unfounded, is further evidenced by a circumstance, which occurred about a century after the establishment of Islam. The story runs that in those days a body of religious "Nihilists," seeing the enormous power which the Quran exercised over the hearts of the Faithful, commissioned a certain Ibn al Muqaffa, a man of profound learning, unsurpassable eloquence and vivid imagination, to produce a book to rival the emanation of Muhammad's pen. Ibn al Muqaffa agreed, but stipulated that he should be allowed a period of twelve months wherein to accomplish his task, during which time all his bodily wants should be supplied, so that he might be enabled to concentrate his mind on the task which he had undertaken. At the expiration of half the allotted interval his friends, on coming to make inquiries as to his progress, found him sitting, pen in hand, deeply absorbed in study, while before him was a blank sheet of paper, and around his desk a wild confusion of closely-written manuscripts torn to pieces, and scattered indiscriminately over the apartment. In good truth he had tried to write a single verse equalling the Quran in excellence, and failed; and he confessed with confusion and shame that a solitary line had baffled all his efforts for six months, so he retired from the task hopeless and crest-fallen.

But in addition to the charm of the language in which Muhammad clothed his mission, he possessed,



another source of power. To quote the words of a pious Muslim : "The poets before him had sung of valour and generosity, of love and strife, and revenge . . . . . of early graves, upon which weeps the morning cloud, and of the fleeting nature of life, which comes and goes as the waves of the desert sands, as the tents of a caravan, as a flower that shoots up and dies away ; or they shoot their bitter arrows of satire right and left into the enemies' own soul. Muhammad sang of none of these. No love-minstrelsy his—not the joys of the world, nor sword, nor camel, nor jealousy, nor human vengeance ; not the glories of tribe or ancestor. He preached Islam."

It is worthy of note that Muhammad in the Quran disclaims all power of working miracles ; trusting, as has been beforesaid, to that sacred book itself as evidence of his mission from on high. After his death, however, his followers, found the temptation of attributing supernatural endowments to the founder of their religion too strong to be resisted. Of the many traditions which clothe the Prophet of Arabia with little less than divine power, the most striking is the account which has been handed down of his "Night Journey" when, bestriding a mystic steed, he was permitted to enter the precincts of Heaven. Pious Muslims believe that the "Messenger of God" was sitting in his house at Mecca, when of a sudden the roof was rent asunder, and the Angel Gabriel descended. Opening the Prophet's breast the heavenly visitant proceeded to wash the heart with water from the holy spring which flows in the sacred city. This done, the messenger of God's behests brought a golden vessel, full of Faith and Knowledge, which he poured into the Prophet's bosom, and then placing him on an animal called "Buraq," a creature between a mule or an ass and a bird, carried his astonished companion towards the skies. On arriving at the first heaven he was introduced to Adam, who is described as being "of a very dark brick-dust complexion, for he was made out of reddish earth, whence

his name Adam." On the right hand and on the left of the forefather of mankind were black appearances, the spirits of his children, in the shape of men. Those on his right were destined for Paradise, those on his left for the regions of despair ; as a consequence, when Adam looked to his right he laughed, but wept when his glance fell on the luckless beings on his left. Mounting upwards, the Prophet proceeded in turn through the remaining six heavens, meeting on his way successively Moses, "a man of tall stature, and the



BURAQ.

colour of wheat, and of middling body," and Jesus, "a middle-sized man, with a red and white complexion, and hair not curly but flowing loosely." All these greeted Muhammad as a friend and a brother. He was then shown the Houris of Paradise, destined for the solace and delight of the Faithful ; and witnessed also the terrible punishments prepared for the unbelievers and hypocrites. Time for prayers being announced, Muhammad acted as Imam, or leader of all the prophets who had gone before him into Heaven.

*The general design of the Quran seems to be to*

unite in the knowledge and worship of the infinite, eternal, invisible God, by whose power, wisdom, and goodness all things were made, the supreme, and One only Governor, Judge, and absolute Lord of creation, the professors of the different religions then followed in the populous country of Arabia, who for the most part lived promiscuously, and wandered without guides, the far greater number being idolaters, and the rest Jews and Christians, mostly of erroneous and heterodox belief; and to bring them all to the obedience of Muhammad, as the prophet and Ambassador of God, who after the repeated admonitions, promises, and threats of former ages, was at last to establish and propagate God's religion on earth by force of arms, and to be acknowledged chief pontiff in spiritual matters, as well as supreme prince in temporal affairs.

In the early ages the religion of the Arabs, which they call the state of ignorance, in opposition to the knowledge of God's true worship revealed to them by their prophet, was chiefly gross idolatry; the Sabian worship having almost overrun the whole nation, though there were also great numbers of Christians, Jews, and Magians among them.

These people not only believed one God, but produced many strong arguments for His unity, though they also paid an adoration to the stars, or the angels and intelligences which they supposed to reside in them and govern the world under the Supreme Deity. They endeavoured to perfect themselves in the four intellectual virtues, and believed the souls of wicked men will be punished for nine thousand ages, but will afterwards be received to mercy. They were obliged to pray three times a day; the first, half an hour or less before sunrise, ordering it so that just as the sun rises they might finish eight adorations, each containing three prostrations; the second prayer ended at noon, when the sun begins to decline, in saying which they performed *five* such adorations as the former: and the same they *used to do* the third time, their task ending just as the

sun sets. They fasted three times a year, the first time thirty days, the next nine days, and the last seven. They offered many sacrifices, but ate no part of them, burning them all. They abstained from beans, garlic, and some other pulse and vegetables. As to the Sabian "Qibla," or part to which they turn their faces in praying, authors greatly differ ; one will have it to be the north, another the south, a third Mecca, and a fourth the star to which they paid their devotions ; perhaps, too, there might have been some variety in their practice in this respect. They were wont to go on pilgrimage to a place near the city of Harran in Mesopotamia, where great numbers of them dwelt, and they had also a great respect for the temple of Mecca, and the pyramids of Egypt ; fancying these last to be the sepulchres of Seth, and of Enoch and Sabi his two sons, whom they regarded as the first propagators of their religion ; at these structures they sacrificed a cock and a black calf, and offered up incense. Besides the book of Psalms, the only true scripture they read, they had other books which they esteemed equally sacred, particularly one in the Chaldee tongue which they called the Book of Seth, a work full of moral discourses. This sect is supposed to have taken the name of Sabians from the above-mentioned Sabi, though it seems rather to be derived from the word Saba, signifying the host of heaven, which they worshipped. Travelers commonly called them Christians of St. John the Baptist, whose disciples they also pretended to be, using a kind of baptism similar in some degree to that customary in Christian worship. This is one of the religions the practice of which Muhammad tolerated (on paying tribute), and the professors of it are often included in that expression of the Quran, "those to whom the scriptures have been given," or literally, *the people of the book*.

The idolatry of the Arabs then, as Sabians, chiefly consisted in worshipping the fixed stars and planets, and the *angels* and their images, which they honoured

as inferior deities, and whose intercession they begged, as their mediators with God. For the Arabs acknowledged one supreme God, the Creator and Lord of the universe, whom they called Alla Taala, the Most High God ; and their other deities, who were subordinate to him, they called simply al Ilahat, *i.e.*, the goddesses.

It was from this gross idolatry, or the worship of inferior deities, or companions of God, as the Arabs continue to call them, that Muhammad reclaimed his countrymen, establishing the sole worship of the true God among them ; so that the Muslims are far from being idolaters, as some writers have pretended.

The worship of the stars the Arabs might easily have been led to adopt from their observing the changes of weather to happen at the rising and setting of certain of them, a circumstance which after a long course of experience induced them to ascribe a divine power to those stars, and to think themselves indebted to them for their rains, a very great benefit and refreshment to their parched country : of this superstition the Quran particularly takes notice.

The ancient Arabians and Indians, between which two nations there was a great conformity of religions, had seven celebrated temples, dedicated to the seven planets.

Though these deities were generally revered by the whole nation, yet each tribe chose some one as the more peculiar object of their adoration.

Of the angels or intelligences which they worshipped, the Quran makes mention only of three, known under the female names of Allat, al Uzza, and Mana. These were by them called goddesses, and the daughters of God ; an appellation they gave not only to the angels, but also to their images, which were either believed to be inspired with life by God, or else to become the tabernacles of the angels, and to be animated by them ; and divine worship was accorded *them*, because it was imagined they interceded with God for such as were their devotees.

Allat was the idol of a tribe which dwelt at Tayif, and had a temple consecrated to her in a place called Nakhla. This idol was destroyed by Muhammad's order, in the ninth year of the Hijra (= A.D. 630). The inhabitants of Tayif, especially the women, bitterly lamented the loss of this their deity, of which they were so fond that they begged of the Prophet as a condition of peace, that it might not be destroyed for three years, and not obtaining that, asked only a month's respite; but he absolutely denied them even this concession. There are several derivations of this word, which most probably takes its origin from the root Alla, of which it is a feminine form meaning "goddess."

Al Uzza, as some affirm, was the idol of the Quraish and lesser tribes; others are of opinion that it was a tree called the Egyptian thorn, or acacia, worshipped by the tribe of Ghatfan, who built a chapel over it, called Boss, so contrived as to give a sound when any person entered. Khalid Ibn Walid being sent by Muhammad in the eighth year of the Hijra (A.D. 629) to destroy this idol, demolished the chapel, and cutting down the tree or image, burnt it: he also slew the priestess, who ran out with her hair dishevelled, and her hands on her head as a suppliant. Yet the author who relates this, in another place says the chapel was pulled down, and its architect himself killed, because he consecrated this chapel with design to draw the pilgrims thither from Mecca, and lessen the reputation of the Kaba. The name of this deity is derived from the root azza, and signifies *the most mighty*.

Mana, the object of worship of the tribes between Mecca and Madina, was a large stone, demolished by one Saad, in the eighth year of the Hijra (= A.D. 629), a year so fatal to the idols of Arabia. The name, derived from a word signifying to flow, refers to the outpouring of the blood of the victims sacrificed to the deity; whence the valley of Mina, near Mecca, where the pilgrims at this day slay their sacrifices, had also its name.

There are also some antediluvian idols against which Noah preached ; these were afterwards taken by the Arabs for gods, having been men of great merit and piety in their day, whose statues they revered at first with a civil honour only, which in process of time became heightened to a divine worship.

Of these Wadd was supposed to be the heaven, and was worshipped under the form of a man.

Sawa was adored under the shape of a woman. This idol, lying under water for sometime after the Deluge, was at length, it is said, discovered by the devil, and was worshipped by certain tribes, who instituted pilgrimages to it.

Yaghuth was an idol in the shape of a lion. Its name seems to be derived from a term which signifies *to help*.

Yauk was worshipped under the figure of a horse. It is said he was a man of great piety, and his death much regretted ; whereupon the devil appeared to his friends in human form, and undertaking to represent him to the life, persuaded them, by way of comfort, to place his effigies in their temples, that they might have it in view when at their devotions. This was done, and seven others of extraordinary merit had the same honours shown them, till at length their posterity made idols of them in earnest. The name Yauk probably comes from a word meaning to *prevent or avert*.

Nasr was a deity adored under the image of an eagle, which the name signifies.

Besides the idols mentioned, the Arabs also worshipped great numbers of others : for every house-keeper had his household god or gods, which he last took leave of and first saluted at his going abroad and returning home. There were no less than 360 idols, equalling in number the days of their year, in and about the Kaba of Mecca ; the chief of which was Hobal, the statue of a man, made of agate, which *having* by some accident lost a hand, the Quraish

repaired it with one of gold : he held in his hand seven arrows without heads or feathers, such as the Arabs used in divination. This idol is supposed to have been the same with the image of Abraham found and destroyed by the Prophet, on his entering the Kaba, in the eighth year of the Hijra (= A.D. 629), when he took Mecca ; the image was surrounded with a great number of angels and prophets, as inferior deities ; among whom, as some say, was Ishmael, with divining arrows in his hand.

Asaf and Nayala, the former the image of a man, the latter of a woman, were also two idols brought from Syria, and placed the one on Mount Safa, and the other on Mount Marwa. It is related that Asaf was the son of Amru, and Nayala the daughter of Sahal, both of the tribe of Jorham, who committing improprieties together in the Kaba, were by God turned into stone, and afterwards worshipped by the Quraish, and so much revered by them, that though this superstition was condemned by Muhammad, yet he was forced to allow them to visit those mountains as monuments of divine justice.

One idol more of this nation merits notice, and that was a lump of dough worshipped by the tribe of Hanifa who treated the sacred mass with a respect worthy of the Papists, presuming not to eat it till they were compelled so to do by famine.

Several of their idols, as Mana in particular, were no more than large rude stones, the worship of which the posterity of Ismael first introduced : for as they multiplied, and the territory of Mecca grew too strait for them, great numbers were obliged to seek new abodes ; and on such migrations it was usual for them to take with them some of the stones of that holy land, and set them up in the places where they located themselves ; and these they at first only compassed out of devotion, as they had accustomed to do the Kaba. But this at last ended in rank idolatry, the Ismailites forgetting the religion left them by their father so far as to pay



divine worship to any *fine* stone which they might happen to meet.

*is this  
in view*

Some of the pagan Arabs gave credence to neither a creation past, nor a resurrection to come, attributing the origin of things to nature, and their dissolution to age. Others believed both, amongst whom were those who, when they died, had their camel tied by their sepulchre, and so left, without meat or drink, to perish, so as to accompany them to the other world, lest they should be obliged, at the resurrection, to go on foot, which was reckoned very scandalous. Some held to a metempsychosis, fancying that of the blood near the dead person's brain was formed a bird named Hama, which once in a hundred years visited the sepulchre; though others say this bird is animated by the soul of him who is unjustly slain, and continually cries, "give me to drink"—meaning of the murderer's blood—till his death be revenged, and then it flies away.

The great doctrine of the Quran is the unity of God, to restore which point was the chief end of Muhammad's mission; it being laid down by him as a fundamental truth, that there never was, nor ever can be, more than one true orthodox religion. For though the particular laws or ceremonies are only temporary, and subject to alteration according to divine direction, yet the substance being eternal truth, is not liable to change but continues immutably the same. And the more effectually to engage people to hearken to him, a great part of the book is devoted to examples of dreadful punishments formerly inflicted by God on those who rejected and abused his messengers; several of which stories are in whole or part taken from the Old and New Testaments.

The other portion of the Quran comprises necessary laws and directions, admonitions to moral and divine virtues, and above all, precepts regarding the worship and reverence of the only true God, and resignation to His will.

*But besides these, there are a great number of pas-*

sages which are occasional, and relate to particular emergencies. For whenever anything happened which perplexed Muhammad, he had constant recourse to a new revelation, as an infallible expedient in all cases of difficulty.

That Muhammad was really the author of the Quran is beyond dispute ; though it is highly probable that he had no small assistance in his design from others.

However this may be, the Muslims absolutely deny that the Book was composed by their Prophet himself, or by any other for him ; it being their general and orthodox belief that it is of divine original, nay, that it is eternal and uncreated, remaining, as some express it, in the very essence of God ; that the first transcript has been from everlasting by God's throne, written on a table of vast size, in which are also recorded the divine decrees past and future : that a copy from this table, in one volume on paper, was by the ministry of the angel Gabriel sent down to the lowest heaven, in the month of Ramazan, on the night of power ; whence Gabriel revealed it to Muhammad by parcels, some at Mecca, and some at Madina, at different times, during the space of twenty-three years, as the exigency of affairs required : giving him, however, the consolation to show him the whole (which they tell us was bound in silk, and adorned with gold and precious stones of Paradise) once a year ; though in the later period of his life he had the favour to see it twice.

The number of visits which the angelic messenger paid to earth for the purpose of revealing to the Prophet the wishes of his Creator is said to have been no less than 24,000 ; but in what shape Gabriel appeared is a matter with regard to which there is considerable difference of opinion amongst Muslims, though they all agree in thinking that his angelic form was laid aside when he came down to this mundane sphere. It is supposed that few chapters were delivered entire, the most part having been revealed piecemeal, and written down *from time to time* by the Prophet's amanuensis,

till they were completed, according to the directions of the angel. The first parcel that was revealed, is generally agreed to have been the first five verses of the ninety-sixth chapter.

After the passages had been taken down in writing by his scribe, from the Prophet's mouth, they were published to his followers, several of whom took copies for their private use, but the far greater number learned them by heart. The originals, when returned, were put promiscuously into a chest, no order of time being observed, for which reason it is uncertain when many passages were revealed.

When Muhammad died, he left his revelations in the same disorder in which he had put them away, and not digested into the method in which we now find them. This was the work of his successor, Abu Bakr, who, considering that a great number of passages were committed to the memory of the Prophet's followers, many of whom had been slain in the wars, ordered the whole to be collected, not only from the palm-leaves and skins on which they had been written, and which were kept between two boards or covers, but also from the mouths of such as had acquired them by heart. And this transcript when completed he committed to the custody of Hafsa, the daughter of Omar, one of the Prophet's widows.

Owing to this circumstance it is generally imagined that Abu Bakr was really the compiler of the Quran ; though for aught appears to the contrary, Muhammad left the chapters complete as we now have them, excepting such passages as his successor might have added or corrected from those who knew them by heart ; what Abu Bakr did else being perhaps no more than to range the chapters in their present order, a labour which seems to have been performed without any regard to chronological sequence, the longest having as a rule been placed first.

In the thirtieth year of the Hijra, Othman being then *Khalif*, and observing the great disagreement in the

copies of the Quran as regards the several provinces of the empire, by advice of the companions, ordered a great number of copies to be transcribed from the compilation of Abu Bakr, in Hafsa's care, under the inspection of some specially selected scholars, whom he directed that wherever they disagreed about any word, they should write it in the dialect of the Quraish, in which it was at first delivered. These copies when made were dispersed in the several provinces of the empire, and the old ones burnt and suppressed. Though many things in Hafsa's copy were corrected by the above-mentioned supervisors, yet some few various readings still occur.

It may interest the curious to learn that of the seven principal editions of the Quran two were published and used at Madina, a third at Mecca, a fourth at Kufa, a fifth at Bussora, a sixth in Syria, and a seventh called the common or vulgar edition. Of these, the first makes the whole number of the verses 6,000 ; the second and fifth, 6,214 ; the third, 6,219 ; the fourth, 6,236 ; the sixth, 6,226 ; and the last, 6,225. But they are all said to contain the same number of words, namely, 77,639 ; and the same number of letters, viz., 323,015.

The first *printed* edition of the entire Quran was published at Venice, in the year 1530, by Paganinus of Brescia. The Pope of Rome, however, was alarmed for the safety of Papal superstition, and all the copies were committed to the flames. The next complete edition appeared at Hamburgh in 1684 in quarto, under the auspices of Hinckleman. A later and more celebrated edition was printed at St. Petersburg, by command of the Empress Catherine, for the benefit of such of her Tartar subjects as were Muslims ; and in order not to offend their prejudices against printed books, the type was cast in such a manner as to present the appearance of a manuscript. A Latin translation was produced in the year 1550, followed after the interval of a century and a half (1698), by the elaborate volumes in the same language which were given to the world by Father Lewis Marani, the confessor of Pope Innocent XI. The

translation best known in England is that by G. Sale, though the labour of his predecessor, Pocock, in no inconsiderable degree paved the way for his more fortunate rival.

It has been said that amongst the Muslims the Quran is considered to have had a divine origin, having been uncreated and eternal; but such a notion is not universal, and many and heated have been the controversies on this very point. One anecdote will suffice to indicate the nature of the dispute which rent Islam in sunder. The Imam ash Shafii, who flourished from about A.H. 150 (= A.D. 767) to A.H. 204 (= A.D. 819), held a public disputation in Baghdad on this very point; quoting the verse from the Quran, "God said be and it was." He proceeded to inquire "Did not therefore God create all things by the word be?" His opponent assented. "If then," was the rejoinder, "the Quran were created, must not the word 'be' have been created with it?" So plain a proposition was unanswerable. "Then," said Shafii, "all things according to you were created by a created being, which is a gross inconsistency and manifest impiety." The disputant was reduced to silence, and proclaimed a pestilent heretic, for whom death was the only reward.

The Muslims would have it believed that the Arabic of the Quran is the language of Heaven, and an effort was made in the first days of Islam to preserve an uniform pronunciation and reading of the Sacred lection: but men of strange lands could not acquire the pure intonation of the people of Mecca, and no less than seven different ways of reading the book became current, owing in a great measure to the absence of vowel points and other diacritical marks. So a voice from Heaven revealed to mankind that they were at liberty to read the Sacred Book in seven dialects, and a recognized School of Readers, seven in number, sprang into existence, whose readings are universally accepted throughout the Muslim world.

*The Doctrines and Precepts of the Quran relating to*

*Faith and Religious Duties.*—To his religion Muhammad gave the name of Islam, which word signifies resignation, or submission to the service and commands of God.

The Muhammadans, again, divide Islam into two distinct parts : Iman, *i.e.* faith, or theory, and Din, *i.e.* religion, or practice ; and teach that it is built on five fundamental points, one belonging to faith, and the other four to practice.

The first is the confession of faith ; that “ there is no God but the true God ; and that Muhammad is His apostle.” Under which they comprehend six distinct branches ; viz., 1. Belief in God ; 2. In his angels ; 3. In his scriptures ; 4. In his prophets ; 5. In the resurrection and day of judgment ; and, 6. In God’s absolute decree and predetermination both of good and evil.

The four points relating to practice are : 1. Prayer, under which are comprehended those washings or purifications which are necessary preparations required before prayer ; 2. Alms ; 3. Fasting ; and 4. The Pilgrimage to Mecca.

*Belief in God.*—The fundamental position on which Muhammad erected the superstructure of his religion was, that from the beginning to the end of the world there has been, and for ever will be, but one true orthodox belief ; consisting, as to matter of faith, in acknowledging the only true God, and believing in and obeying such messengers or prophets as He should from time to time send, with proper credentials, to reveal His will to mankind ; and as to matter of practice, in the observance of the immutable and eternal laws of right and wrong, together with such other precepts and ceremonies as God should think fit to order for the time being, according to different dispensations in different ages of the world.

Under pretext that this eternal religion was in his time corrupted, and professed in its purity by no one sect of men, Muhammad claimed to be a prophet sent

by God to reform those abuses which had crept into it, and to reduce it to its primitive simplicity ; with the addition, however, of peculiar laws and ceremonies, some of which had been used in former times, and others were now first instituted. And he comprehended the whole substance of his doctrine under these two propositions, or articles of faith ; viz., that there is but one God, and that himself was the apostle of God ; in consequence of which latter article, all such ordinances and institutions as he thought fit to establish must be received as obligatory and of divine authority.

Regarding the attributes of God the Muhammadans believe that he is (1) Living and Eternal ; (2) all-knowing ; (3) all-powerful ; (4) able to do what he wills ; (5) all-hearing ; (6) all-seeing ; and (7) endued with speech. But there is a considerable diversity of opinion as to the interpretation to be put upon some of these powers, and Islam is rent into factions holding views totally at variance with each other on many points of dogma relative to the Almighty Ruler of the world.

The names of God are supposed to be 3,000 in number, of which one thousand are known to the angels, and a thousand to the Prophets, while the remaining thousand are thus distributed : in the Pentateuch three hundred, in the Psalms and in the Gospels respectively a similar number, while in the Quran there are to be found ninety and nine, one being still hidden, and concealed from mankind.

*Angels.*—The Muhammadans believe in the existence of Angelic beings free from all sin, who neither eat nor drink, and who have no distinction of sex. As a rule invisible, save to animals, who, according to common belief can see them, they occasionally at special times appear in human form. Of such beings there is a hierarchy. In the highest rank are those nearest to God. These are the firm supporters of His throne, who receive the homage of the others. The first of *these is in the likeness of a man*, the second in that of *a bull*, the third in that of an eagle, and the fourth in

that of a lion. On the day of judgment, however, four other angels will be added to these, because in the Quran it is written that on that occasion eight angels will sustain the throne of God. After these comes the angel named "Ruh" or "Spirit," thus named, because every breath he draws creates a soul.

The four angels who are considered to enjoy God's favour in a pre-eminent degree are (1) Gabriel, the guardian and communicator of His revelation, who in the space of one hour can descend from Heaven to earth, and who, with one wing, of which he has 600, can lift up a mountain; (2) Michael, an archangel, whose special province is to see that all created beings have what is needful for them, both as regards body and soul; (3) Izrail, the angel of death, whose feet stand on the foundation of the earth, while his head reaches to the highest heavens, to whom is assigned the duty of receiving men's souls when they die; and lastly (4) Israil, the angel of the Resurrection.

In addition to these are the cherubim, occupied exclusively in chanting the praises of God; the two *secretaries*, who record the actions of men; the *observers* who spy out the least gestures, and hear every word of mankind; the *travellers*, who traverse the whole earth in order to know when people utter the name of God, and pray to Him; the angels of the seven planets; the two guardian angels appointed to keep watch over the world; these latter are changed every day; the two angels of the grave; the nineteen who have charge of Hell; and lastly, the countless multitudes of heavenly beings who, according to the Muslim belief, are charged with the care of the earth, each particle of which has a separate angel, and who fill the illimitable expanse of space.

The devil, whom Muhammad names Iblis from his despair, was once one of those angels nearest to God's presence, and fell, according to the doctrine of the Quran, for refusing to pay homage to Adam at the command of the Lord of Heaven.



According to the notions of the Muslims, there is a special arrangement made by Providence to mitigate the evils of Satanic interference. Iblis, though able to assume all other forms, is not permitted to appear in the semblance of the Deity, or any of His Angels, or Prophets. There would otherwise be much danger to human salvation, as under the appearance of one of the prophets, or of some superior being, the Tempter might make use of his power to seduce men to sin. To prevent this, whenever he attempts to assume such forms, fire comes down from heaven and repulses him.

It has been said that the angels are immaculate, but, if the story of Harut and Marut is to be accepted as genuine—a matter upon which there is considerable difference of opinion amongst Muslims themselves—this dictum must be qualified to some extent. The tale runs that in the time of Enoch the Prophet, when the angels beheld the wickedness of mankind, they were sorely distressed, and said to the Creator of Heaven and Earth, "O Lord! Adam and his descendants, whom Thou hast appointed as Thy vice-gerents on earth, act disobediently." To which the Lord replied, "If I were to send you on earth, and to give you hurtful and angry dispositions, you too would sin." The angels thought otherwise, so God bade them select two of their number, who should undergo this ordeal. A choice having been made, the Almighty implanted in their hearts the passions of lust and anger, saying, "Go to and fro on the earth from day to day, put an end to the quarrels of men, ascribe no equal to me, do not commit adultery, drink no wine, and every night repeat the exalted name of God, then return to Heaven." For a while all went well, till one day a beautiful woman named Zohra brought them a cup of wine, whereupon one of the angels said, "God has forbidden it." But his brother was bewitched with the seductive persuasiveness of the fair daughter of Eve, and pleaded "God is merciful and forgiving." So they drank the wine, killed *the husband of Zohra*, to whom in their jovial moments

they had revealed the "exalted name" of God, and fell into grievous sin. But they found to their cost, on awakening from their debauch, that the "name" which they had disclosed had fled from their memories, and so they could not return to heaven. Thereupon they begged Enoch to intercede for them. The Prophet consented, with the result that they were allowed to choose between a present and a future punishment. They elected the former alternative, and are to this day hanging suspended with their heads downwards in a well, a fresh spring ever flowing just beyond reach of their parched lips. The woman, the author of all this evil and mischief, was changed into a star. The story is doubtless legendary, but it serves to show that according to the Muhammadan view the Angels of Heaven are not immaculate, or free from the vices which degrade their less favoured brethren on earth.

Besides angels and devils, the Muhammadans are taught by the Quran to believe in an intermediate order of creatures, which they call Jinn, or Genii, created of fire, but of a grosser fabric than angels; since they eat and drink, and propagate their species, and are subject to death, though they are supposed generally to live several centuries. Some of these are good, and others bad, but all capable of future salvation or damnation, alike as men; whence Muhammad claimed to be sent for the conversion of genii as well as men. The Orientals pretend that these spirits inhabited the world for many ages before Adam was created, under the government of several successive princes, who all bore the common name of Solomon; but falling at length into an almost general corruption, Iblis was sent to drive them into a remote part of the earth, there to be confined: that some of that generation still remaining, they were forced by one of the ancient kings of Persia, who waged war against them, to retreat into the famous mountains of Qaf. Of which successions and wars they have many fabulous and romantic stories. They also make different ranks and degrees among these beings

(if they be not rather supposed to be of a different species), some being called absolutely Jinn, some Peri or fairies, some Div or giants, others Taqwins or fates.

*Scriptures.*—As to the Scriptures, the Muhammadans are taught by the Quran that God, in divers ages of the world, gave revelations of His will in writing to several prophets, the whole and every word of which it is absolutely necessary for a good Muslim to believe. The number of these sacred books was, according to them, 104. Of which ten were given to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Idris or Enoch, ten to Abraham; and the other four, being the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Gospel, and the Quran, were successively delivered to Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad; which last being the seal of the prophets, those revelations are now closed, and no more are to be expected. All these divine books, except the four last, they agree to be now entirely lost, and their contents unknown; though the Sabians have several works which they attribute to some of the antediluvian prophets. And of these four the Muslims hold that the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospel, have undergone so many alterations and corruptions, that though there may possibly be some part of the true word of God therein, yet no credit is to be given to the present copies in the hands of the Jews and Christians. The Jews in particular are frequently stigmatized in the Quran for falsifying and corrupting their copies of the law. As Muhammad acknowledged the divine authority of the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospel, he often appeals as proofs of his mission, to the consonancy of the Quran with those writings, and to the prophecies therein which he alleged concerned himself; and he frequently charges the Jews and Christians with stifling the passages which bear witness to him. His followers also fail not to produce several texts even from our present copies of the Old and New Testament, to support their master's cause.

*Prophets.*—The number of Prophets sent by God to

make known his will is usually stated at about 200,000, of whom twenty-five are mentioned in the Quran ; of these latter the principal, ranked in order of merit, are Noah (the prophet of God), Abraham (the friend of God), Moses (the speaker of God), Jesus (the spirit of God), and chief of all, Muhammad (the messenger of God). These, one and all, will be permitted to intercede in the Day of Judgment for their followers. There is some difference of opinion as to whether the prophets are superior to the angels. Some Muhammadans are inclined to one view, some to another. Again the question of sinlessness on the part of these favoured mortals is one to which considerable attention has been paid by Muslim theologians. The orthodox belief is that they are free from sin owing, as some think, to the Grace of God, which perpetually keeps them in the right path, or, as others suppose, because the power of sinning is not created in them. As, however, history records that Prophets have at times stepped aside from the paths of rectitude and propriety, Muhammadans to meet the difficulty, divide sin into two distinct categories, "great sins" and "little sins." It is the universal belief that a prophet never, either wittingly or unwittingly, commits offences in the former category ; but there is a latitude allowed with regard to the latter class of wrongdoings, though some excuse the frailties of the Prophets as faults and slight imperfections, not amounting to sin ; and it is not a little curious that the one sinless prophet of Islam, he who alone of all is mentioned in the pages of the Quran as free from guilt, is the founder of the Christian Faith.

It is the universal belief that Prophets work miracles. It is true that in the Quran Muhammad disclaims such a power ; but, none the less, his followers ascribe to him mighty and wonderful deeds, far transcending the feeble attempts of all those who preceded him : thus the sun and the moon obeyed his behests, the elements, too, were subservient unto him, while not only were the *keys of the treasures of earth* in his possession, but

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*Why not as well as*

Heaven itself opened its portals to receive the chosen of God.

*Resurrection.*—The next article of faith required by the Quran is the belief in a general resurrection and a future judgment. But before considering the Muhammadan tenets on those points, it will be well to mention their views concerning the intermediate state, both of the body and of the soul, after death.

When a corpse is laid in the grave, he is received by an angel, who gives him notice of the coming of the "examiners," in the shape of two livid black angels, with blue eyes and of terrible appearance, named Munkir and Nakir. These order the dead person to sit upright, and examine him concerning his faith, as to the unity of God, and the mission of Muhammad : it is for this reason that, when a person is buried, a cavity is made in such a way as to leave room for the body to be raised at the period of examination. If the answer be satisfactory, the body is suffered to rest in peace, and it is refreshed by the air of Paradise ; but if not, the angels beat him on the temples with iron maces, till he roars out for anguish so loud, that he is heard from east to west, by all except men and genii. Then they press the earth on the corpse, which is gnawed and stung till the resurrection by ninety-nine dragons, each having seven heads ; or, as others say, sins will become, as it were, venomous beasts, the grievous ones stinging like dragons, the smaller like scorpions, and the others like serpents ; circumstances which are not infrequently understood in a figurative sense.

As to the soul, when it is separated from the body by the angel of death, who performs his office with ease and gentleness towards the good, and with violence towards the wicked, it enters into that state which they call *Al Barzakh* or *the interval* between death and the resurrection. If the departed person were a believer, two angels meet it, who convey it to heaven, that its *place there* may be assigned according to its merit and *degree*. For the souls of the faithful are divided into

three classes : first, prophets, whose spirits are admitted into Paradise immediately ; second, martyrs, whose souls according to a tradition of Muhammad, rest in the crops of green birds, which eat of the fruits and drink of the rivers of Paradise ; and third, other believers, concerning whose state before the resurrection there are various opinions. 1. Some say they stay near the sepulchres, with liberty, however, of going wherever they please ; which they confirm from the Prophet's custom of making a salutation when reaching a place of burial, and from a statement on his part that the dead answer none the less though they cannot hear such salutations as well as the living. Whence perhaps proceeds the custom of visiting the tombs of relations, so common among the Muhammadans. 2. Others imagine they are with Adam, in the lowest heaven ; an opinion which they support by the authority of their Prophet, who gave out that on his return from the celestial regions in his well-known night-journey, he saw there the souls of those who were destined to Paradise on the right hand of Adam, and of those who were condemned to destruction on his left. 3. Some again fancy the souls of believers remain in the spring Zamzam, and those of infidels in a certain well in the province of Hadramaut, called Burhut ; but this opinion is branded as heretical. 4. Others say they stay near the grave for seven days ; but that whither they go afterwards is uncertain. 5. There are not wanting Muslims who hold that they are all in the trumpet the sound of which is to raise the dead. 6. Lastly, it is thought that the souls of the good dwell in the form of white birds, under the throne of God. As to the condition of the spirits of the wicked, besides the opinions that have been already mentioned, the more orthodox hold that they are taken by the angels to heaven, whence being repulsed as unclean and filthy, they are brought to the earth, and being also refused a place there, are carried down to the seventh earth, and thrown into a dungeon, which they call Sijjin, under a *green rock*, or according to a tradition of Muhammad,

under the devil's jaw, to be tormented till they are called up and joined again to their bodies.

Touching the matter of children there is a similar difference of opinion : the general notion is that if their parents be believers, the young people will be questioned, but that angels will teach them to say, "Allah is my Lord, Islam my religion, and Muhammad my Prophet." But with reference to the offspring of unbelievers, some think that they will be in Araf—a place between heaven and hell, to be hereafter described—while others suppose that they will be compelled to act in Paradise as servants and attendants for the followers of God.

Though not a few among the Muhammadans hold to the view that the resurrection will be merely spiritual, and consist in no more than the return of the soul to the place whence it first came ; and others, who allow man to be composed of body only, that it will be merely corporeal, the received opinion is that both body and soul will be raised, and Muslim doctors argue strenuously for the possibility of the resurrection of the body, and dispute with great subtlety concerning the manner thereof. In any case it is supposed that one part of the human frame will be preserved whatever becomes of the rest, to serve for a basis of the future edifice, or rather a leaven for the mass which is to be joined to it. For the Prophet taught that a man's body was entirely consumed by the earth, except only the bone called al Ajb : and that, as it was the first formed in the creation of a human being, it will also remain uncorrupted till the last day, as a seed whence the whole is to be renewed : and this it is said will be effected by a forty days' rain sent by God, which will cover the earth to the height of twelve cubits, and cause the bodies to sprout forth like plants.

The time of the resurrection is admitted to be a perfect secret to all but God alone. But the approach of that day will be known from certain signs which are to *precede it*.

*The lesser signs are : 1. The decay of faith among*

men. 2. The advancing of the meanest persons to eminent dignity, 3. That a maid-servant shall become the mother of her mistress (or master); by which is meant either that towards the end of the world men shall be much given to sensuality, or that the Muhammadans shall then take many captives. 4. Tumults and seditions. 5. War with the Turks. 6. Great distress in the world, so that a man when he passes by another's grave shall say "Would to God I were in his place." 7. That the provinces of Iraq and Syria shall refuse to pay their tribute. And, 8. That the buildings of Madina shall reach to Ahab, or Yahab.

The greater signs are :

1. The sun's rising in the west : which some have imagined was originally the case.

2. The appearance of a beast, apparently similar to that in the Book of Revelations.

3. War with the Greeks, and the taking of Constantinople by seventy thousand of the posterity of Isaac. On the division of the spoil, news will come of the appearance of Antichrist, whereupon the captors shall leave all, and return back.

4. The coming of Antichrist, called al Masih'u'd Dajjal, *i.e.* the false or lying Christ, or simply al Dajjal. He is to be one-eyed, and marked on the forehead with the letters C.F.R., signifying as some think the word "Kafir," or infidel.

He will bring with him the resemblance of Paradise and Hell, but in fact that which is supposed to be the abode of the Lost is Heaven, while that which appears as the realm of Bliss is the region of Eternal Misery. According to the traditions of the Prophet this Antichrist is to appear first between Iraq and Syria, or according to others in the province of Khorassan ; riding on an ass, he will be followed by seventy thousand Jews of Ispahan, and continue on earth forty days, of which one will be equal in length to a year, another to a month, another to a week, and the rest will be common days ; he will, moreover, lay waste all places, but will not enter Mecca or



Madina, which are to be guarded by angels ; in the end he will be slain by Jesus, who is to encounter him at the gate of Ludd. It is said that Muhammad foretold several Antichrists, to the number of about thirty, but one of greater note than the rest.

5. The descent of Jesus on earth. It is supposed that he is to alight near the white tower to the east of Damascus, when the people are returning from the capture of Constantinople ; that he is to embrace the Muslim religion, marry a wife, get children, kill Antichrist, and at length die after remaining on earth forty or, according to others, twenty-four years. During this period there will be great security and plenty in the world, all hatred and malice being laid aside ; while lions and camels, bears and sheep, will live in peace, and a child play with serpents unhurt.

6. War with the Jews ; of whom the Muhammadans are to make a religious slaughter, the very trees and stones discovering such of the race as hide themselves, except only the tree called Gharqad, which is the tree of the Jews.

7. The irruption of Gog and Magog, or, as they are called in the east, Yajuj and Majuj ; of whom many things are related in the Quran, and the traditions of the Prophet. These barbarians having passed the lake of Tiberias, which the vanguard of their vast army will drink dry, will come to Jerusalem, and there greatly distress Jesus and his companions ; till, at His request, God will destroy them, and fill the earth with their carcasses, which, after some time, God will send birds to carry away, at the prayers of Jesus and His followers. Their bows, arrows, and quivers the Muslims will burn for seven years together ; and at last God will send a rain to cleanse the earth, and to make it fertile.

8. A smoke, which shall fill the whole earth.

9. An eclipse of the moon. Muhammad predicted that there would be three eclipses before the last hour ; one to be seen in the east, another in the west, and the *third in Arabia.*

10. The returning of the Arabs to the worship of Allat and al Uzza, and the rest of their ancient idols ; after the decease of every one in whose heart there was faith equal to a grain of mustard-seed, none but the very worst of men will be left alive. For God, they say, will send a cold odoriferous east wind, blowing from Syria Damascena, which shall sweep away the souls of all the faithful, and even the Quran itself, so that men will remain in the grossest ignorance for a hundred years.

11. The discovery of a vast heap of gold and silver by the receding of the Euphrates, an event which will be the destruction of many persons.

12. The demolition of the Kaba or temple of Mecca, by the Ethiopians.

13. The speaking of beasts and inanimate things.

14. The breaking-out of fire in the province of Hijaz ; or, according to others, in Yaman.

15. The appearance of a man of the descendants of Kahtan, who shall drive men before him with his staff.

16. The coming of the Mahdi or director ; concerning whom Muhammad prophesied that the world should not have an end till one of his own family should govern the Arabians, whose name should be the same with his own name, and whose father's name should also be the same with his father's name, and who should fill the earth with righteousness. This person, some sects, as has been previously stated, believe to be now alive, and concealed in a secret place, till the time of his manifestation ; for they suppose him to be none other than the last of the twelve Imams, named Muhammad Abu'l Kasim.

17. A wind which shall sweep away the souls of all who have but a grain of faith in their hearts, as has been mentioned under the tenth sign.

These are the greater signs, which, according to the doctrine of the followers of the Prophet of Arabia, *are to precede the resurrection*, but still leave the precise

hour uncertain : for the immediate token of its appearance will be the first blast of the trumpet ; which latter they believe will be sounded three times. The first they call the *blast of consternation* ; the second, the *blast of examination* ; and the third, after forty years, the *blast of resurrection* ; on this latter occasion the trumpet will be sounded by Israfil. This angel having, by the divine order, set the trumpet to his mouth, and called together all the souls from all parts, will throw them into the same, whence, on his giving the last sound, at the command of God, they will fly forth like bees, and fill the whole space between heaven and earth, and then repair to their respective bodies, which the opening earth will suffer to arise ; and the first who shall so come forth, according to a tradition of Muhammad will be himself.

As to the length of the Day of Judgment, the Quran in one place indicates that it will last 1,000 years, and in another 50,000.

The resurrection will be general, and extend to all creatures, both angels, genii, men, and animals.

Those who are destined to be partakers of eternal happiness will arise in honour and security ; and those who are doomed to misery, in disgrace and under dismal apprehensions. The Prophet further taught, by another tradition, that mankind shall be assembled at the last day, distinguished into three classes. (a) Those who go on foot ; (b) those who ride ; and (c) those who creep grovelling with their faces on the ground. The first class is to consist of those believers whose good works have been few ; the second of those who are in greater honour with God, and more acceptable to Him ; whence Ali affirmed that the pious when they come forth from their sepulchres, shall find ready prepared for them white-winged camels, with saddles of gold ; and the third class, will be composed of the infidels, whom God shall cause to make their appearance with their faces on the earth, blind, dumb, and deaf. But the ungodly will not thus alone be distin-

guished ; for, according to a tradition of the Prophet, there will be ten sorts of wicked men on whom God will on that day fix certain marks. The first will appear in the form of apes,—these are the professors of Zandicism ; the second in that of swine,—these are they who have been greedy of filthy lucre, and enriched themselves by public oppression ; the third will be brought with their heads reversed and their feet distorted,—these are the usurers ; the fourth will wander about blind,—these are unjust judges ; the fifth will be deaf, dumb, and blind, understanding nothing,—these are they who glory in their own works ; the sixth will gnaw their tongues, which will hang down upon their breasts, corrupted blood flowing from their mouths like spittle, so that everybody shall detest them,—these are the learned men and doctors, whose actions contradicted their sayings ; the seventh will have their hands and feet cut off,—these are they who have injured their neighbours ; the eighth will be fixed to the trunks of palm trees or stakes of wood,—these are the false accusers and informers ; the ninth will smell worse than a corrupted corpse,—these are they who have indulged their passions and voluptuous appetites, but refused God such part of their wealth as was due to Him ; the tenth will be clothed with garments daubed with pitch,—these are the proud, the vain-glorious, and the arrogant.

The end of the resurrection the followers of Islam declare to be, that they who are so raised may give an account of their actions, and receive their eternal reward. And they believe that not only mankind, but the genii and irrational animals also, shall be judged on this great day ; to an extent that the unarmed cattle will be permitted to take vengeance on the horned till entire satisfaction shall be given to the injured.

As to mankind, they hold that when they are all assembled together, they will not be immediately brought to judgment, but the angels will keep them in their *ranks and order* while they are waiting for that purpose ;

and this interval of suspense some say is to last forty years, others seventy, others 300, nay, some say no less than 50,000 years, each of them vouching their Prophet's authority. During this space people will stand looking up to heaven, but without receiving thence any information or orders, and will suffer grievous torments, both the just and the unjust, though with manifest difference. For the limbs of the former, particularly those parts which they used to wash in making the ceremonial ablution before prayer, will shine gloriously, and their sufferings will be light in comparison, lasting no longer than the time necessary to say the appointed prayers; but the latter will have their faces obscured with blackness, and disfigured with all the marks of sorrow and deformity. What will then occasion not the least of their pain, is a wonderful and incredible perspiration, which will even stop their mouths, and in which they will be immersed in various degrees according to their demerits, some to the ankles only, some to the knees, some to the middle, some so high as their mouth, and others as high as their ears. And this sweat, it is supposed, will be provoked not only by that vast concourse of all sorts of creatures mutually pressing and treading on one another's feet, but by the near and unusual approach of the sun, which will then be no farther from them than the distance of a mile, or, as some translate the word, the signification of which is ambiguous, than the length of a bodkin. So that their skulls will boil like a pot, and they will all be bathed in moisture. From this inconvenience, however, the good will be protected by the shade of God's throne; but the wicked will be so miserably tormented therewith, and also with hunger, thirst, and a stifling air, that they will cry out, "Lord, deliver us from this anguish, though thou send us into hell-fire."

When those who have risen shall have waited the fixed time, God will at length appear to judge them; *Muhammad* undertaking the office of intercessor, after

it shall have been declined respectively by Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jesus, who one and all will beg deliverance only for their own souls. On this solemn occasion God will come in the clouds, surrounded by angels, and producing the books wherein the actions of every person are recorded by their guardian angels, will command the prophets to bear witness against those to whom they have been respectively sent. Then every one will be examined concerning all the words and actions uttered and done in this life ; not as if God needed any information in those respects, but to oblige the person to make public confession and acknowledgment of the Almighty's justice. The particulars of which they shall give an account, as the Prophet himself enumerated them, are—of their time, how they spent it ; of their wealth, by what means they acquired it, and how they employed it ; of their bodies, wherein they exercised them ; of their knowledge and learning, what use they made of them. It is said, however, that Muhammad affirmed that no less than seventy-thousand of his followers will be permitted to enter Paradise without any previous examination. Another advantage which on the day of judgment the Muslims will possess over less-favoured races, is that either a Jew or a Christian will be assigned to each faithful Musulman as a substitute to be cast into the everlasting pit in case the accident of an adverse sentence on the part of the Lord{of heaven should overtake the hapless follower of the Prophet !

To the above-mentioned questions each person shall answer, and make his defence in the best manner he can, endeavouring to excuse himself by casting the blame of his evil deeds on others, so that a dispute shall arise even between the soul and the body, to which of them their guilt ought to be imputed, the soul saying, "O Lord, my body I received from Thee ; for Thou createdst me without a hand wherewith to lay hold, a foot wherewith to walk, an eye wherewith to see, or an understanding wherewith to apprehend, till I came and *entered into this body* ; therefore, punish it

eternally, but deliver me." The body, on the other side, will make this apology :—" O Lord, thou createdst me like a stock of wood, having neither hand with which I could lay hold, nor foot with which I could walk, till this soul, like a ray of light, entered into me, and my tongue began to speak, my eye to see, and my foot to walk ; therefore punish it eternally, but deliver me." But God will propound to them the following parable of the blind man and the lame man. A certain king, having a pleasant garden, in which were ripe fruits, set two persons to keep it, one of whom was blind and the other lame, the former not being able to see what to pick nor the latter to gather it ; the lame man, however, beholding the fruit, persuaded the blind man to take him upon his shoulders ; and by that means he easily plucked the same, and they then divided it between them. The lord of the garden, coming some time after, and inquiring as to his property, each began to excuse himself ; the blind man said he had no eyes to see the trees, and the lame man that he had no feet to approach them. But the king, ordering the lame man to be set on the blind, passed sentence on and punished them both. And in the same manner will God deal with the body and the soul.

Though the Muhammadans assign a long space for the attendance of the resuscitated before their trial, yet they tell us the trial itself will be over in much less time, and, according to an impression of their Prophet, familiar enough to the Arabs, will last no longer than while one may milk an ewe, or than the space between the two milkings of a she-camel. Some, explaining those words so frequently used in the Quran, " God will be swift in taking an account," say that He will judge all creatures in the space of half a day, and others that it will be done in less time than the twinkling of an eye.

At this examination they also believe that each person will have delivered to him the book, wherein all *the actions* of his life are written ; the righteous will

receive the same in their right hand, and read with great pleasure and satisfaction ; but the ungodly will be obliged to take the fatal records against their wills in their left hand, which will be bound behind their backs, its neighbour on the right being tied up to their necks.

To show the exact justice which will be observed on this great day of trial, a balance will be brought, wherein all things shall be weighed. It will be held by Gabriel, and it is of so vast a size, that its two scales, one of which hangs over Paradise, and the other over Hell, are capacious enough to contain both heaven and earth : and those whose balances laden with their good works shall be heavy, will be saved, but those whose balances are light will be condemned. Nor will any have just cause to complain that God suffers any good action to pass unrewarded, because the wicked have their reward in this life, and therefore can expect no favour in the next.

But when this ordeal is passed, the trials of mankind are not ended, for the Muhammadans hold that on the Day of Judgment two angels, named Mihr and Surush, will stand on the bridge called Pul-i-Chinavad, which spans the abyss of Hell, to examine every person as he passes ; that the former, who represents the divine mercy, will hold a balance in his hand, to weigh the actions of men ; that according to the report he shall make thereof to God, sentence will be pronounced, those whose good works are found more ponderous, if they turn the scale but by the weight of a hair, being permitted to pass forward to Paradise ; but those whose good works shall be found light, will be precipitated from the bridge into Hell by the other angel, who represents God's justice.

This examination being passed, and every one's works weighed in a just balance, mutual retaliation will follow, according to which every creature will take vengeance one of another, or receive satisfaction for the injuries which have been suffered. And



since there will then be no other way of returning like for like, a proportionable part of the good works of him who offered the injury, will be taken away and added to the amount of him who suffered it. Which being done, if the angels (by whose ministry this is to be performed) say, "Lord, we have given to every one his due; and there remaineth of this person's good works so much as equalleth the weight of an ant," God will of His mercy cause it to be doubled unto him, that he may be admitted into Paradise; but if, on the contrary, his good works be exhausted, and there remain but evil works, and there be any who have not yet received satisfaction from him, God will order that an equal weight of their sins whom he had injured, be added unto his own, that he may be punished for them in their stead, and he will be sent to Hell laden with this additional burden. Such will be the method of God's dealing with mankind. As to brutes, after they shall have likewise taken vengeance of one another, as mentioned above, He will command them to be changed into dust; wicked men being reserved to more grievous punishment: so that they shall cry out, on hearing the sentence passed on the brutes, "Would to God that we were dust also!" As to the genii, many are of opinion that such of them as are true believers will undergo the same fate as the irrational animals, and have no other reward than the favour of being converted into dust; but others assign them a place near the confines of Paradise, where, to a certain extent, they will enjoy felicity, though they be not admitted into that delightful mansion. But the unbelieving genii, it is universally agreed, will be punished eternally, and be thrown into Hell with the infidels of mortal race.

The trials being over and the assembly dissolved, those who are to be admitted into Paradise will take the right-hand way, and those who are destined to *perdition* (upwards, it is said, of 999 out of every 1,000)

will take the left ; but both of them must first pass the bridge, called in Arabic as Sirat, which they say is laid over the midst of Hell, and described to be finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword : so that it seems very difficult to conceive how any one shall be able to stand upon it. This bridge is beset on each side with briers and hooked thorns ; which, however, will be no impediment to the good, for the latter will pass with wonderful ease and swiftness, like lightning or the wind, Muhammad and his Muslims leading the way ; whereas the wicked, what with the slipperiness and extreme narrowness of the path, the entangling of the thorns, and the extinction of the light, which directed the saved to Paradise, will soon miss their footing, and fall down headlong into the yawning abyss beneath.

As to the punishment of the wicked, the Muhammadans are taught that Hell is divided into seven circles, one below another, designed for the reception of as many distinct classes of lost souls. The first, Jahan-nam, will be the receptacle of those who acknowledged one God, that is, the wicked followers of Islam, who after having there been punished according to their demerits, will at length be released. The second, named Laza, will receive the Jews ; the third, named al Hutama, the Christians ; the fourth, named al Sair, the Sabians ; the fifth, named as Saqar, the Magians ; the sixth, named al Jahim, the idolaters ; and the seventh, al Hawiyat, the lowest and worst of all, the hypocrites, or those who outwardly professed some religion, but in their hearts were without a God.

With reference to the torments of Hell, it must be remarked, however, that the infidels alone will be liable to eternity of damnation, for the Muslims who having embraced the true religion, have none the less been guilty of heinous sins, will be delivered thence after they shall have expiated their crimes by their sufferings.

*The wall or partition between Paradise and Hell,*

seems to have been suggested by the great gulf of separation mentioned in Scripture. They call it al Arf, and more frequently in the plural, al Araf, a word derived from the verb *arafa*, which signifies to *distinguish* between things, or to *part* them; though some commentators give another reason for the imposition of this name, because, they say, those who stand on this partition will know and distinguish the blessed from the lost, by their respective marks or characteristics; while others think the word properly intends anything that is high raised or elevated, as such a wall of separation must be supposed to be. The Muhammadan writers greatly differ as to the persons who are to be found on al Araf. Some imagine it to be a sort of limbo for the patriarchs and prophets, or for the martyrs and those who have been most eminent for sanctity, among whom will be also angels in the form of men. Others place here those whose good and evil works are so equal that they exactly counterpoise each other, and, therefore, deserve neither reward nor punishment; and these, they say, will, on the last day, be admitted into Paradise, after they shall have performed an act of adoration, which will be imputed to them as a merit, and will make the scale of their good works to overbalance. Others, again, suppose this intermediate space will be a receptacle for those who have gone to war without their parents' leave, and therein suffered martyrdom; being excluded Paradise for their disobedience, and escaping Hell because they are martyrs. The breadth of this partition wall cannot be supposed to be exceeding great, since not only those who shall stand thereon will hold conference with the inhabitants both of Paradise and of Hell, but the blessed and the damned themselves will also be able to talk to one another.

The righteous, having surmounted the difficulties, and passed the sharp bridge above mentioned, before they enter Paradise will be refreshed by drinking at the *pond of their Prophet*, who describes it to be an exact *square*, of a month's journey in compass: its water

which is supplied by two pipes from al Qawsar, one of the rivers of the celestial realms, being whiter than milk or silver and more odoriferous than musk, with as many cups set around it as there are stars in the firmament, of which water whoever drinks will thirst no more for ever. This is the first taste which the blessed will have of their future, and now near-approaching felicity.

Though Paradise is so very frequently mentioned in the Quran, yet it is a dispute among the Muhammadans whether it is already created, or is yet to be created hereafter: some sectaries asserting that there is not at present any such place in nature, and that the Paradise which the righteous will inhabit in the next life, will be different from that from which Adam was expelled. However the orthodox profess the contrary, maintaining that it was created even before the world, and describe it, from their Prophet's traditions, in the following manner:

It is situate above the seven heavens (or in the seventh heaven) and next under the throne of God: the earth thereof is composed of the finest wheat flour, or of the purest musk, or, as others will have it, of saffron; its stones are pearls and jacinths, the walls of its buildings being enriched with gold and silver, while the trunks of all its trees are of the first-mentioned precious metal, among which the most remarkable is the tree called Tuba, or the tree of happiness. Concerning this latter it is believed that it stands in the palace of Muhammad, though a branch of it will reach to the house of every true believer; that it will be laden with pomegranates, grapes, dates, and other fruits of surprising size, and of tastes unknown to mortals. So that if a man desire to eat of any particular kind of fruit, it will immediately be presented to him; or if he choose flesh, birds ready dressed will be set before him according to his wish. The boughs of this tree will spontaneously bend down to the hand of the person who would gather of its fruits, *and it will supply the blessed not only with food, but*

also with silken garments, and beasts whereon to ride ready saddled and bridled, and adorned with rich trappings which will burst forth from its fruits ; this tree, too, is so large, that a person mounted on the fleetest horse would not be able to gallop from one end of its shade to the other in a hundred years.

As plenty of water is one of the greatest additions to the pleasantness of any Eastern locality, the Quran often speaks of the rivers of Paradise as a principal ornament thereof ; some of these streams, they say, flow with water. some with milk, some with wine, and others with honey, all taking their rise from the root of the tree "Tuba." And lest these should not be sufficient, this garden is also watered by a great number of lesser springs and fountains, whose pebbles are rubies and emeralds, their earth of camphire, their beds of musk, and their sides of saffron, the most remarkable among them being "Salsabil" and "Tasnim."

But all these glories will be eclipsed by the resplendent and ravishing girls of Paradise, the enjoyment of whose company will be a principal felicity of the faithful. These, they say, are created not of clay, as in the case of mortal women, but of pure musk : being, as their Prophet often affirms, free from all natural impurities, defects, and inconveniences incident to the sex ; further, too, they will be of the strictest modesty, and secluded from public view in pavilions of hollow pearls, so large that, as some traditions have it, one of them will be no less than sixty miles long, and as many broad.

The name which the Muhammadans usually give to this happy mansion, is "al Jannat," or the garden ; and sometimes they call it, with an addition, Jannat al Firdaus, the garden of paradise, Jannat Adan, the garden of Eden, Jannat al Mawa, the garden of abode, Jannat al Naim, the garden of pleasure, and the like ; by which several appellations some understand a similar number of different abodes, or at least places of various *degrees of felicity* (for they reckon no less than a *hundred such in all*), the very meanest whereof will

afford its inhabitants so many pleasures and delights, that one would conclude persons must even sink under them, had not the Prophet declared, that in order to qualify the blessed for a full enjoyment of such bliss, God will give to every one the abilities of a hundred men.

Besides Muhammad's pond, already described, some authors mention two fountains, springing from under a certain tree near the gate of Paradise, and say, that the blessed will also drink of one of them, to purge their bodies and carry off all impurities, and will wash themselves in the other. When they are arrived at the gate itself, each person will there be met and saluted by the beautiful youths appointed to serve and wait upon him, one of them running before, to carry the news of his arrival to the wives destined for him ; two angels will also appear, bearing the presents from God, one of whom will invest him with a garment of Paradise, and the other will put a ring on each of his fingers, with inscriptions on them alluding to the happiness of his condition. By which of the eight gates of Paradise they are respectively to enter, is not worth inquiry ; but it must be observed that Muhammad has declared that no person's good works will gain him admittance, and that even himself shall be saved, not by his merits, but merely by the mercy of God. It is, however, the constant doctrine of the Quran, that the felicity of each person will be proportioned to his deserts, the abodes being assorted according to the varied gradations of happiness ; the most eminent degree for the Prophets, the second for the doctors and teachers of God's worship, the next for the martyrs, and the lower for the rest of the righteous. There will also be some distinction made in respect to the time of admission ; Muhammad (to whom the gates will first be opened) having affirmed, that the poor will enter Paradise five hundred years before the rich : nor is this the only privilege which the former will enjoy in the next life ; since the Prophet has also declared, that when he took a view of the celestial regions, *he saw that the majority of its inhabitants were*

composed of the poor ; while when he looked down into Hell, he noticed that the greater part of the wretches confined there were women !

For the first entertainment of the blessed on their admission, the whole earth will then be as one loaf of bread, which God will reach to them with his hand, holding it like a cake ; while for meat they will have the ox Balaam, and the fish Nun, the lobes of whose livers will suffice 70,000 of the principal guests, viz., those who, to that number, will be admitted into paradise without examination.

From this feast every one will be dismissed to the mansion designed for him, where he will enjoy such a share of felicity as will be proportioned to his merits, but vastly exceeding comprehension or expectation ; since the very meanest will have 80,000 servants, seventy-two wives of the girls of Paradise, besides the spouses he had in this world (in some cases it may be feared a questionable felicity), and a tent erected for him of pearls, jacinths, and emeralds, of a very large extent ; according to another tradition he will be waited on by 300 attendants while he eats, his food being served in dishes of gold, whereof 300 shall be set before him at once, containing each a different kind of food, the last morsel of which will be as grateful as the first ; he will also be supplied with as many sorts of liquors in vessels of the same metal. To complete the entertainment, there will be no want of wine, which, though forbidden in this life, will yet be freely allowed to be drunk in the next, and without danger, since that beverage in Paradise will neither inflame nor inebriate. The flavour of this celestial potation we may conceive to be delicious beyond description, since the water of Tasnim and the other fountains which will be used to dilute it, is said to be wonderfully sweet and fragrant. If any object to these pleasures, as an impudent Jew did to Muhammad, and contend that so much eating and drinking must necessarily involve various bodily functions, it

may be answered that the inhabitants of Paradise will not need even to blow their noses, for all superfluities will be discharged and carried off by perspiration, or a sweat odoriferous as musk, after which their appetite will return afresh.

The magnificence of the garments and furniture promised by the Quran to the godly in the next life, is answerable to the delicacy of their diet. For they are to be clothed in the richest silks and brocades, chiefly of green, which will burst forth from the fruits of Paradise, and will be also supplied by the leaves of the tree Tuba ; they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and silver, and crowns set with pearls of incomparable lustre ; and will make use of silken carpets, litters of a prodigious size, couches, pillows, and other rich furniture embroidered with gold and precious stones.

That the inhabitants of Paradise may be the better able to taste these pleasures in their height, they will enjoy a perpetual youth ; at whatever period of life they may happen to die, they will be raised in their prime and vigour, and become as if about thirty years of age, which they will never exceed (it may also be remarked that the tortures of Hell are perpetuated to the lost souls in a precisely similar manner). When the blessed enter into bliss, they will be of the same stature with Adam, who, as is fabled, was no less than 60 cubits high. And to this age and stature their children, if they shall desire any (for the choice will be in their own hands), will immediately attain ; according to that saying of their Prophet, " If any of the faithful in Paradise be desirous of issue, it shall be conceived, born, and grown up within the space of an hour." And in the same manner, if any one shall have a fancy to employ himself in agriculture (which rustic pleasure may suit the wanton fancy of some), what he shall sow will spring up and come to maturity in a moment.

Lest any of the senses should lack their proper



delight, the ear will there be entertained, not only with the ravishing songs of the angel Israfil, who has the most melodious voice of all God's creatures, and with the strains of the daughters of Paradise ; but even the trees themselves will celebrate the divine praises with a harmony exceeding whatever mortals have heard ; to which will be joined the sound of the bells hanging on the trees, which latter will be put in motion by the wind proceeding from the throne of God, so often as the blessed wish for music : nay, the very clashing of the golden-bodied trees, whose fruits are pearls and emeralds, will surpass human imagination ; so that the pleasures of this sense will not be the least of the enjoyments of the saved.

The delights above enumerated will be common to all the inhabitants of Paradise, even those of the lowest of all the hundred orders therein. What then, must they enjoy who shall obtain a superior degree of honour and felicity ? For these, there are prepared, besides all this, "such things as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Muhammad is reported to have said, that the meanest of them will see his gardens, wives, servants, furniture, and other possessions take up the space of a thousand years' journey (for so far and farther will the blessed see in the next life) ; but that he will be in the highest honour with God, who shall behold the face of the Almighty morning and evening : and this favour is supposed to be that additional or superabundant recompense, promised in the Quran, which will give such exquisite delight, that in respect thereof all the other pleasures of Paradise will be forgotten and lightly esteemed. In face of this circumstance, it can scarcely be contended, as some maintain, that the Muhammadans admit of no spiritual pleasure in the next life, but make the happiness of the blessed to consist wholly in corporeal enjoyments.

Before quitting this subject it may not be improper to observe the falsehood of a vulgar imputation on the

followers of Islam, who are by several writers reported to hold that women have no souls ; or, if they have, that they will perish, like those of brute beasts, and will not be rewarded in the next life. But whatever may be the opinion of ignorant people, it is certain that Muhammad had too great a respect for the fair sex to teach such a doctrine ; and there are several passages in the Quran which affirm that women, in the next life, will not only be punished for their evil actions, but will also receive the rewards of their good deeds, just as in the case of the men, and that in this case God will make no distinction of sexes. It is, avowedly, by no means certain that they will be admitted into the same abode with men, because their places will be supplied by the paradisiacal females (though some allow that a man will there also have the company of those who were his wives in this world, or at least such of them as he shall desire) ; but it is equally taught that good women will go into a separate place of happiness, where they will enjoy all sorts of delights ; whether, however, one of those pleasures will be the enjoyment of agreeable companions of the male persuasion created for them, to complete the economy of the Muhammadan system, is nowhere decided. One circumstance relating to these beatified females, conformable to what has been asserted of the men, may be gathered from the Prophet's reply to an old woman, who, desiring him to intercede with God that she might be admitted into Paradise, he told her that no old woman would enter that place ; which setting the poor creature crying, he explained himself by saying that God would then make her young again.

*Predestination.*—The sixth great point of faith, which the Muhammadans are taught by the Quran to believe, is God's absolute decree and predestination both of good and evil. For the orthodox doctrine is, that whatever hath been or shall come to pass in this world, whether it be good or whether it be bad, proceedeth entirely from the divine will, and is irrevocably fixed and recorded from all eternity in the preserved table ;

God having secretly predetermined not only the adverse and prosperous fortune of every person in this world, in the most minute particulars, but also his faith or infidelity, his obedience or disobedience, and consequently his everlasting happiness or misery after death ; which fate it is not possible, by any foresight or wisdom, to avoid.

Of this doctrine Muhammad makes great use in his Quran for the advancement of his designs ; encouraging his followers to fight without fear, and even desperately, for the propagation of their faith, by representing to them that all their caution could not avert their inevitable destiny, or prolong their lives for a moment ; and deterring them from disobeying or rejecting him as an imposter, by setting before them the danger they might thereby incur of being abandoned, by the just judgment of God, to seduction, hardness of heart, and a reprobate mind, as a punishment for their obstinacy.

As this doctrine of absolute election and reprobation has been thought by many Muslim divines to be derogatory to the goodness and justice of God, and to make Him the author of evil, several subtle distinctions have been invented, and disputes raised, to moderate or soften it ; and different sects have been formed, according to their several opinions or methods of explaining this point.

It will suffice to mention the three well-defined schools of thought which exist in this matter. (1.) The Jabrians, so called from the word "Jabr," compulsion, who deny all free agency in man, and say that the latter is necessarily constrained by the force of God's eternal and immutable decree to act as he does. They hold that as the Almighty is the absolute Lord, He can, if He so wills, admit all men into Paradise, or cast them into Hell. The difficulties which this doctrine involves, may be gathered from a tradition current amongst Muslims that Adam and *Moses* once maintained a debate before God ; the

latter said, "Thou art that Adam whom God created and breathed into thee His own Spirit, and made the angels bow down before thee, and placed thee in Paradise: after which thou threwest man upon the earth, from the fault which thou didst commit." Adam rejoined, "Thou art that Moses whom God selected for His Prophet, and to converse with thee, and He gave thee twelve tables, in which are explained everything, and He made thee His confidant and the bearer of His secrets: then how long was the Bible written before I was created?" Moses taken off his guard, promptly replied, "Forty years." "And," pursued Adam, "thou didst see therein that I disobeyed God." "Yes," was the necessary response. "Dost thou reproach me," so spake the triumphant victor, "on a matter which God wrote in the Bible forty years before creating me?"

(2.) The Quadrians, who deny "Al Qadr" or God's absolute decree, and maintain that evil and injustice ought not to be attributed to God, but to man, who is altogether a free agent. "What happens," pertinently inquire their opponents, "if a man wills to move his body, and God at the same time wills it to be steady?"

(3.) The Asharians, so called after the founder of their sect, who maintain that God has one eternal will, which is applied to whatsoever He wisheth: that the destiny of man was written on the eternal table before the world was created; but whenever a man desires to do a certain thing, good or bad, the action corresponding to the desire is there and then created by God, and, as it were, fitted on to real desire.

*Prayer.*—Of the four fundamental points of religious practice required by the Quran, the first is prayer, under which, as has been said, are also comprehended those legal washings or purifications which are necessary preparations thereto.

Of these purifications there are two degrees;  
(1.) "Wazu" or "Abdast," the ordinary ablution in

common cases, and before prayer ; it consists in washing the face from the top of the forehead to the chin, as far as the ear ; in cleansing the hands and arms up to each elbow ; in rubbing a fourth part of the head with the wet hand, and in wiping the feet to the ankles.

These actions may be done in silence, or prayer may be repeated : of the invocation to the Deity, used on such occasions, one example will suffice. When cleaning the teeth, the votary says, "Vouchsafe, O God, as I clean my teeth, to purify me from my faults, and accept my homage, O Lord ! May the purity of my teeth be for me a pledge of the whiteness of my face at the Day of Judgment."

The other purification which is known as "Ghusl," consists in an ablution of the whole body after certain defilements. The *modus operandi* is as follows : The person, having put on clean clothes and performed the "wazu," proclaims his intention to make "Ghusl" and "to put away impurity." All being ready, he pours water over the right shoulder three times, then over the left three times, and lastly on his head a like number of times ; so particular and careful must he be, that it is accepted amongst Muslims that if but one hair of the body be left untouched with the water, the whole act of purification is rendered vain and useless.

When water is not procurable, or when, in case of sickness, its use might be injurious, purification by sand is allowable.

Minute regulations are laid down with regard to the water which may be used for purification : rain, water from the sea, rivers, fountains, and wells is allowable, as also snow, and ice-water ; but, singularly enough, ice itself is not lawful. As to what constitutes impurity in water, and so renders it unfit for ablutions, it may be said, briefly, that it is universally accepted amongst the orthodox that if a dead body or any unclean thing falls into flowing water, or into a reservoir more than fifteen feet square, the liquid

can be used, provided always that the colour, smell, and taste be not changed. It is for this reason that the pool near a mosque is never less than a certain size.

There are also special prayers for individual occasions, such as an eclipse of the sun, moon, times of drought, funerals (in the latter case they are always repeated in the open space in front of the mosque, or in some neighbouring spot, never in the graveyard), special work, fast of "Ramazan," &c., &c.

*Circumcision.*—Circumcision, though not so much as once mentioned in the Quran, is yet held by the Muhammadans to be an ancient divine institution, confirmed by the religion of Islam, not indeed so absolutely necessary but that it may be dispensed with in some cases, yet highly proper and expedient. The Arabs used this rite for many ages before the advent of the Prophet, having probably learned it from Ishmael, who in common with other tribes practised the same. The Ishmaelites, we are told, used to circumcise their children, not on the eighth day, as is the custom of the Jews, but when about twelve or thirteen years old, at which age their father underwent that operation; and the Muhammadans imitate them so far as not to circumcise children before they be able, at least, distinctly to pronounce that profession of their faith, "There is no God but God, Muhammad is the apostle of God"; the age selected varies from six to sixteen or thereabouts. Though the Muslim doctors are generally of opinion that this precept was originally given to Abraham, yet some have imagined that Adam was taught it by the angel Gabriel, to satisfy an oath he had made to cut off that flesh which, after his fall, had rebelled against his spirit; whence an odd argument has been drawn for the universal obligation of circumcision.

*Prayer.*—Prayer was by Muhammad thought so necessary a duty, that he used to call it the pillar of

religion and the key of Paradise ; and when in the ninth year of the Hijra a neighbouring tribe sent to make their submission to the Prophet, after the retention of their favourite idol had been denied them, begging that, at least, they might be excused saying the appointed prayers, he answered, " There could be no good in that religion wherein was no prayer."

That so important a duty, therefore, might not be neglected, Muhammad obliged his followers to pray five times every twenty-four hours, at certain stated periods, viz., 1. In the morning, before sunrise ; 2. When noon is past, and the sun begins to decline from the meridian ; 3. In the afternoon, before sunset ; 4. In the evening, after sunset, and before close of day ; and 5. After the day is ended, and before the first watch of the night. For this institution he asserted that he had received the divine command from the throne of God himself, when he took his night journey to heaven ; and the duty of observing the stated times of prayer is frequently insisted on in the Quran, though they be not particularly prescribed therein. Accordingly, at the aforesaid periods, of which public notice is given by the Muazzin, or Crier, from the steeples of their mosques (for they use no bell), every conscientious Muslim prepares himself for prayer, which he performs either in the sanctuary or any other place (provided it be clean), after a prescribed form, and with a certain number of phrases or ejaculations (which the more scrupulous count by a string of beads), and using certain postures of worship ; it is not permissible to abridge the devotions, unless in some special cases ; as on a journey, or preparing for battle, &c.

For the regular performance of the duty of prayer among the Muhammadans, besides the particulars above mentioned, it is also requisite that they turn their faces, while they pray, towards the temple of Mecca ; *the quarter* where the same is situate being, for that

reason, pointed out within their mosques by a niche, which they call "al Mihrab," and without, by the situation of the doors opening into the galleries of the steeples; in places where they have no other direction there are also tables calculated for the ready finding out their "Qibla," or part towards which they ought to pray.

But what is principally to be regarded in the discharge of this duty, is the inward disposition of the heart, which is the life and spirit of prayer; the most punctual observance of the external rites and ceremonies before mentioned being of little or no avail, if performed without due attention, reverence, devotion and hope: so that it must not hastily be concluded that the Muhammadans, or the considerate part of them at least, content themselves with the mere *opus operatum*; nor may it be imagined that their whole religion consists in a mere external system of devotion.

Two matters deserve mention in connection with this subject. One is, that the Muhammadans never address themselves to God in sumptuous apparel, though they are obliged to be decently clothed; but lay aside their costly habits and pompous ornaments, if they wear any, when they approach the divine presence, lest they should seem proud and arrogant. The other is, that they do not admit their women to pray with them in public; that sex being obliged to perform their devotions at home, or if they visit the mosques it must be at a time when the men are not there: for the Muslims are of opinion that their presence inspires a different kind of devotion from that which is requisite in a place dedicated to the worship of God.

*Alms.*—The next point of the Muhammadan religion is the giving of alms, which are of two sorts, legal and voluntary. The former are of indispensable obligation, being commanded by the law, which both *directs the portion* which is to be given, and determines



what things ought to be given ; but the latter are left to every one's liberty to give more or less, as he shall see fit. Obligatory alms some think to be properly called Zakat, while voluntary alms are known as Sadaqat ; though this name, is somewhat indiscriminately used. They are called Zakat, either because they increase a man's store, by drawing down a blessing thereon, and produce in his soul the virtue of liberality, or because they purify the remaining part of his substance from pollution, and the soul from the filth of avarice ; while Sadaqat indicates that they are a proof of a man's sincerity in the worship of God. Some writers have called the legal alms tithes, but improperly, since in some cases they fall short, and in others exceed that proportion.

The giving of alms is frequently commanded in the Quran, and often recommended therein jointly with prayer ; the former being held of great efficacy in causing the latter to be heard of God : for which reason the Khalif Omar used to say, "that prayer carries us half-way to God, fasting brings us to the door of His palace, and alms procure us admission."

The traditions, also, are very severe upon persons who omit to observe the duty of charity : "To whomsoever God gives wealth," so runs the terrible denunciation, "and he does not perform the charity due from it, his wealth will be made into the shape of a serpent on the day of resurrection, which shall not have any hair upon its head, and this is a sign of its poison and long life : and it has two black spots upon its eyes, and it will be twisted round his neck like a chain on the day of resurrection : then the serpent will seize the man's jawbones, and will say, 'I am the wealth, the charity from which thou didst not give, and I am thy treasure for which thou didst not separate any alms.'" Another tradition says, "Verily two women came to the Prophet, each having a bracelet of gold on her arm, and the Prophet said, '*Do ye perform the alms for them?*' They said 'we

do not.' Then the Prophet said to them, 'Do you wish that God should cause you to wear Hell fire in place of them?' They eagerly responded in the negative, whereupon he commanded them to 'Perform the alms for them.'

In these circumstances the Muhammadans, esteem almsdeeds to be highly meritorious, and many of them have been illustrious for the exercise thereof. Hasan, the son of Ali, and grandson of Muhammad, in particular, is related to have thrice in his life divided his substance equally between himself and the poor, and twice to have given away all he had: and the generality are so addicted to acts of benevolence, that they extend their charity even to brutes.

Alms, according to the prescriptions of the Muhammadan law, are to be given of five things—1. Of cattle, that is to say, of camels, kine, and sheep. 2. Of money, 3. Of corn. 4. Of fruits, viz., dates and raisins. And 5. Of wares sold. Of each of these a certain portion is to be given in charity, being usually one part in forty, or two and a half per cent. of the value. But no alms are due for them, unless they amount to a certain quantity or number; nor until a man has been in possession of them eleven months, he not being obliged to give therefrom before the twelfth month is begun: nor are they due for cattle employed in tilling the ground, or in carrying of burdens. In some cases a much larger portion than the before-mentioned is reckoned due oblation: thus of what is gotten out of mines, or the sea, or by any art or profession, over and above what is sufficient for the reasonable support of a man's family, and especially where there is a mixture or suspicion of unjust gain, a fifth part ought to be given in charity. Moreover, at the end of the fast of Ramazan, every Muslim is obliged to give in alms for himself and for everyone of his family, if he has any, a measure of wheat, barley, dates, raisins, rice, or other commonly eaten provisions.

The legal alms were at first collected by the Prophet

himself, who employed them as he thought fit, in the relief of his poor relations and followers, though he chiefly applied them to the maintenance of those who served in his wars, and fought, as he termed it, in the way of God. His successors continued to do the same, till, in process of time, other taxes and tributes being imposed for the support of the government, they seem to have been weary of acting as almoners to their subjects, and to have left the latter to pay their donation according to their consciences.

*Fasting.*—The third point of religious practice is fasting ; a duty of so great moment, that Muhammad used to say it was “the gate of religion,” and that “the odour of the mouth of him who fasteth is more grateful to God than that of musk.” According to the Muslim divines, there are three degrees of fasting : 1. The restraint of the stomach and other parts of the body from satisfying their lusts ; 2. The maintenance of the ears, eyes, tongue, hands, feet, and other members free from sin ; and 3. The fasting of the heart from worldly cares, and the concentration of the thoughts solely on God.

The Muhammadans are obliged, by the express command of the Quran to fast the whole month of Ramazan, from the time the new moon first appears, till the appearance of the next new moon ; during which time they must abstain from eating, drinking, and lust, during the period from daybreak till night or sunset. If on account of dull weather, or of dust storms, the new moon be not visible, it is sufficient to act on the testimony of a trustworthy person, who may declare that Ramazan has commenced. This injunction they observe so strictly, that while they fast they suffer nothing to enter their mouths, or other parts of their body, esteeming the fast broken and null if they smell perfumes, take a clyster, bathe, or even purposely swallow their spittle ; some being so cautious that they will not open their mouths *to speak*, lest they should breathe the air too freely. The *fast is also* deemed void if a man kiss or touch a woman,

or if he vomit designedly, while even should a portion of food no larger than a grain of corn, from the nightly meal remain between the teeth, or in a cavity of the mouth, the fast is destroyed. But after sunset they are allowed to refresh themselves, and to eat and drink, and enjoy the company of their wives until daybreak ; though the more rigid begin the fast again at midnight. This fast is extremely rigorous and mortifying when the month of Ramazan happens to fall in summer (for the Arabian year being lunar, each month runs through all the different seasons in the course of thirty-two years), the length and heat of the days making the observance of it much more difficult and uneasy in such case than in winter.

Its distinctive feature is that it lasts only during light : accordingly the rich mitigate its rigours as far as possible by turning night into day : but amongst the poorer and industrial classes such a proceeding is obviously impossible ; none the less, however, so strictly do they obey the injunction of the Prophet in this matter that when Burton visited Cairo in the disguise of a Musulman doctor, he found but one patient who would break his fast, even though warned that the result of obstinacy might be death.

The reason given why Ramazan was selected for this purpose is, that on that month the Quran was sent down from heaven. But some assert that Abraham, Moses, and Jesus received their respective revelations in the same month.

From the fast of Ramazan none are excused, except only travellers and sick persons (under which last denomination the Muslims comprehend all whose health would manifestly be injured by their keeping the fast ; as women with child and giving suck, elderly people, and young children) ; but then they are obliged, as soon as the impediment is removed, to fast an equal number of other days : the deliberate breaking of the fast is ordered to be expiated, either by setting a slave at liberty, by *fasting* every day for two months, or by *giving*

sixty persons two full meals each, or one man a like number of repasts daily for sixty days : if the omission arise from the infirmity of old age the expiation consists in the bestowal of alms.

When the thirty days have expired the fast is broken, and this joyous occasion is known as the Idu'l Fatr, *i.e.*, the "feast of the breaking of the Fast," though it is sometimes called the lesser Bairam. The reaction which sets in after so lengthened a period of restraint finds vent in every conceivable token of joy ; the men lounge about happy, merry, and convivial, while the fair sex don their best jewellery and lightest attire ; festive songs and loud music fill the air, friends meet, presents are distributed, and all is life, joy, cheerful mirth, and amusement. The voluntary fasts of the Muhammadans are such as have been recommended either by the example or approbation of their Prophet ; especially in regard to certain days of those months which they esteem sacred : there being a tradition that he used to say, "That a fast of one day in a sacred month was better than a fast of thirty days in another month ; and that the fast of one day in Ramazan was more meritorious than a fast of thirty days in a sacred month." Among the more commendable days is that of Ashura, the tenth of Muharram : regarding which it is related that when Muhammad came to Madina, and found the Jews there fasted on the day of Ashura, he asked them the reason of it ; they told him it was because on that day Pharaoh and his people were drowned, Moses and those who were with him escaping : whereupon he said that he bore a nearer relation to Moses than they, and ordered his followers to fast on that day. However, it seems afterwards he was not so well pleased in having imitated the Jews ; and therefore declared that, if he lived another year, he would alter the day, and fast on the ninth, abhorring so near an agreement with them.

While, however, on the one hand certain days are considered especially fitting for the observance of fast-

ings, there are on the other, a few occasions when it is unlawful to observe this duty, these are five in number, viz., the Idu'l Fatr, the Baqid, which will be explained hereafter, and the 11, 12 and 13 of the month Zu'l Hijja.

*The Pilgrimage to Mecca.*—"It is a duty towards God incumbent on those who are able to go thither to visit this house" [Becca or Mecca] (Quran, Sura 3). Thus decreed the Prophet, the law-giver of Arabia, and for more than twelve centuries the injunction has been observed with a pious zeal and ardent fervour which put to shame the apathetic indifference of the civilized West. Volumes have been written by Muslim commentators in regard to this pilgrimage to the Holy Cities of Mecca and Madina, some laying more and some less stress upon the duty in question. Without seeking to follow in this labyrinth of sophistry and argument, it will suffice to assert that, whatever may be the *precise* value which Muhammad attached to the ceremony, he considered the discharge of the duty as all-important; and there is a tradition that he held that he who passes through life without fulfilling the injunction, "Perform the Pilgrimage of Mecca" (Quran, Sura 2), may as well die a Jew or a Christian. Nor must it be overlooked that the Prophet of Islam made the "Hajj" one of the five pillars or foundations of practice in the religion of Arabia.

Every Muslim is therefore bound to visit Mecca at least once during his lifetime, but there is a saving clause—provided "able" so to do. The discussions as to the definition of the elastic qualification attached to the injunction of the Prophet have been endless and undecided. As a general rule, however, intending votaries must comply with four conditions: (1) Profession of the faith of Islam; (2) adolescence, generally fixed at the age of fifteen; (3) freedom from slavery; (4) mental sanity. To these some authorities add four more requirements, viz: (1) sufficiency of provision; (2) the possession of a beast of burden, if living more

than two days' journey from Mecca ; (3) security on the road ; and (4) ability to walk two stages if the pilgrim have no beast. Others, again, include all conditions under two heads : (1) health, and (2) ability. It is even maintained by some, that those who have money enough, if they cannot go themselves, may hire some one to go to Mecca in their stead. But this privilege in the early days of Islam was very sparingly, if ever, used, and even now it is mostly considered amongst the orthodox sects that pilgrimage cannot be performed by proxy. None the less, however, if a Muhammadan on his death-bed bequeath a sum of money to be paid to some person to visit Mecca on behalf of his patron, it is considered to satisfy in a way the claims of the Muslim law. It is also decreed a meritorious act to pay the expenses of those who cannot afford to obey the injunction of the Prophet. Many pilgrims, too poor to be able to collect the money which their religion requires them to spend for this purpose, beg their way, and live upon the charity of those who are blessed with means and a benevolent heart to help their more necessitous brethren. Even women are not excused from the performance of the pilgrimage, and one portion of the temple is called "Haswatu'l Haram," or "the women's sanded place," because it is appropriated to female devotees. But the weaker sex are forbidden to go alone ; if, therefore, a fair lady have no husband or near relation to protect her, she must select some virtuous person worthy of confidence to accompany her, his expenses being charged to her account. This circumstance gives rise to a curious illustration of supply and demand. There are a class of idle and impudent scoundrels known as "dalils," or guides, who besiege the pilgrim from morn till eve, obtruding advice whether it be sought or not, and sharing the votary's meals, but *not* his expenses, of which indeed they pocket a portion. These worthless vagabonds are wont, when the occasion presents *itself*, to let themselves out as husbands for rich old

widows who repair to Mecca, or perchance now and again lend their services to some younger matrons who may have happened to lose their spouses on the road, it being meritorious and profitable to facilitate the progress of desolate ladies through the sacred territory of Arabia. The marriage under these circumstances, though formally arranged in the presence of the "Qazi," or magistrate, is merely nominal, and a divorce is given on the return of the parties to Jedda, or elsewhere beyond the limits of Mecca. Pilgrimage is not obligatory upon slaves, who, should they accompany their master to Mecca, must none the less on being released from bondage again repair to the Holy City as "free men."

It need scarcely be said that Muhammad, ready as he was to impose the pilgrimage as a duty upon others, was no less willing to accept the obligation himself, while after his death the Khalifs who succeeded him gloried in following his example; though it is but fair to add that they journeyed in many cases with great pomp and luxury, at the head of a magnificent retinue. This devout practice continued certainly as late as the time of Khalif Harun u'r Rashid, who early in the ninth century visited Mecca no less than nine times; on one occasion expending, it is said, a sum of upwards of £700,000 sterling! If, however, his own confession is to be accepted, the result of his piety was satisfactory, inasmuch as he gained thereby numerous victories over his enemies—a circumstance which led him to inscribe on his helmet an Arabic passage to the effect that "he who makes the pilgrimage to Mecca becomes strong and valiant."

So firmly impressed, indeed, are the Muhammadans with the impiety of neglecting the decree of their Prophet with regard to the pilgrimage, that in A.H. 319 (A.D. 931-2), when in consequence of the proceedings of the Karmathians, who, on one occasion at that period, had slain 20,000 pilgrims, and plundered the temple of Mecca, the journey to the Holy Cities was too danger-



ous to be hazarded, devout Muslims, rather than omit the duty altogether, betook themselves to Jerusalem. It is also recorded that a famous doctor, by name Hüllage, was put to death for having taught certain ceremonies and prayers to supply the neglect of performing the "Hajj." Great indeed must be the merit of bowing in adoration before the mosque of the Arabian holy city, since it is taught that every step taken in the direction of the sacred precincts blots out a sin, while he who dies on his way is enrolled in the list of martyrs. In spite of all this (such is the weakness of human nature), in Burckhardt's time (about 1815), he found that Muhammadans were getting more and more lax in complying with the injunction of the Quran relative to pilgrimage, pleading the increased expense attendant on this duty, which in many cases they evade by giving a few dollars to some pious votaries to add to their own prayers some words on behalf of their errant and absent brethren.

It must not, however, be supposed that Muhammad *introduced* this rite amongst the Arabs; far otherwise, for he merely lent to an institution which he found in existence the all-potent weight of his sanction and approval. Omitting reference to primeval times, it will suffice to draw attention to the fact that, so far back as the middle of the fifth century, or upwards of 200 years before the era of the Prophet, the command of Mecca having passed into the hand of Qussai, "he maintained the Arabs," thus writes Tabari, one of the most trustworthy of native historians, "in the performance of all the prescriptive rites of pilgrimage, because he believed them in his heart to be a religion which it behoved him not to alter." Indeed, according to Sir W. Muir, who has carefully investigated the subject, "the religious observances thus perpetuated by Quassi were in substance the same as in the time of Muhammad, and with some modification the same as we still find practised at the present day." It is not improbable *that the Arabs in turn borrowed the notion of pil-*

grimage from the Jews. According to Muslim divines man being but a "wayfarer," winding his steps towards another world, the "Hajj" is emblematical of his transient condition here below. The idea, though admittedly poetical, is so far borne out in practice that pilgrimage is common to all faiths of olden times. In the words of a modern writer, "the Hindus wander to Egypt, to Thibet, and to the inhospitable Caucasus; the classic philosophers visited Egypt, the Jews annually flocked to Jerusalem, and the Tartars and Mongols (Buddhists) journey to distant Lama serais. The spirit of pilgrimage was predominant in mediæval Europe, and the processions of the Roman Catholic Church are, according to her votaries, modern memorials of the effete rite."

Before entering upon any description of the mode in which the pilgrimage is carried out, it may be well to notice some incidental matters, not only in themselves worthy of attention, but in regard to which a clear understanding is necessary to make intelligible the account of the "Hajj" which will follow.—

The temple of Mecca, termed indifferently "Masjidu'l Haram" (the Sacred Mosque), or Bait'ullah (the House of God), is an oblong square enclosed in a great wall, the measurement of which is variously estimated. Burckhardt reckons it at 440 yards long, by 352 broad, while Burton gives the dimensions as 452 yards by 370. None of the sides are quite in a straight line, though a casual observer would not detect the irregularity. On the eastern side the open square is enclosed by a colonnade, round which are pillars in a quadruple row, being three deep on the other sides; these are united by pointed arches, every four of which support a dome plastered and whitened on the outside. These domes are 152 in number. The pillars are about 20 feet in height and generally from one foot and a half to one foot and three quarters in diameter, being more or less irregular. Some are of white marble, granite or porphyry, but the greater number are of common stone

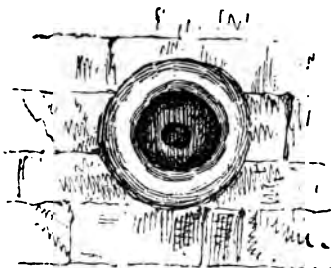
from the mountains of Mecca. Between every three or four columns stands an octagonal pillar about four feet in thickness. On the east side are two shafts of reddish grey granite in one piece, and one of fine grey porphyry, with slabs of white felspar. On the north side is one red granite column, as well as a pillar of fine grained red porphyry. Some parts of the walls and arches are gaudily painted in stripes of yellow, red, and blue, as are also the minarets, though paintings of flowers in the usual Musulman style are nowhere seen. The floors of the colonnades are paved with large stones badly cemented together. Causeways, also paved, lead from the colonnades towards the centre ; these latter are of sufficient breadth to admit four or five persons to walk abreast, and they are elevated about 9 inches above the ground. Between these causeways, which are covered with fine gravel or sand, grass appears growing in several places, produced by the water oozing out of the jars which are arranged on the ground in long rows during the day. There is a descent of eight or ten steps from the gates on the north side into the platform of the colonnade, and of three or four steps from the gates on the south side. The whole of these buildings are studded with small domes or cupolas, while seven minarets with varied quadrangular and round steeples with gilded spires and crescents, lend to the Mosque a picturesque and pleasing appearance.

Towards the middle of the area stands the Kaba, an oblong massive structure, the dimensions of which, according to Burckhardt, are as follows :—length 45 feet, breadth 35 feet, and height from 35 to 40 feet. Burton, however, gives the measurements, as 55 feet  $\times$  45 feet, while it appeared to him taller than it was long. It is composed of grey Mecca stone in large blocks of different sizes. According to some authorities these latter are roughly joined together with bad cement, while others maintain that the stones are tolerably fitted, and held by excellent mortar like Roman cement. The

Kaba stands upon a base two feet in height, composed of fine white marble slabs, polished like glass, welded in which are large brass rings for the purpose of holding down the covering. The outer roof (for there is also an inner roof) is supported from within by three octangular pillars of aloe wood, between which, on a bar of iron, hang some silver lamps. The only door which affords entrance is on the eastern side (though Burckhardt erroneously places it in the northern wall), about 7 feet above the ground. It is universally accepted that originally the door was on a level with the pavement, and no satisfactory explanation has ever been forthcoming for the hollow round the Kaba. Some chroniclers are of opinion that the Quraish tribe, when in charge of the Holy Temple, raised the door to prevent devotees entering without permission, an explanation which does not, however, account for the fact that the floor of the building is on a level with the door. It is generally supposed that in days gone by there was a second door, on the side of the temple opposite the present entrance. However, there is now but one door; this, which was brought to Mecca from Constantinople in A.D. 1633, is coated with silver, and ornamented with several gilt decorations. At its threshold various small lighted wax candles and perfuming pans filled with musk, aloe wood, &c., are placed every night, and pilgrims and pious devotees collect the drippings of wax, the ashes from the aloe wood, and the dust from the "Ataba," or threshold, either to rub upon their foreheads or to preserve as relics.

At the south-eastern corner of the Kaba, near the door, is the famous "Black Stone," or "Hajaru'l Aswad," which forms a part of the sharp angle of the building at from 4 to 5 feet from the ground. It is an irregular oval about 7 inches in diameter, with an undulating surface, composed of about a dozen smaller stones of different sizes and shapes, well joined together with a small quantity of cement, and perfectly well-smoothed; the whole looking as if the stone had

been broken into many pieces by a violent blow, and then united again. Worn away as the precious relic has been by the kisses of countless myriads of pilgrims, who have touched and kissed the sacred emblem, it is hazardous to conjecture what was its original colour ; at present it is a deep reddish brown, approaching to black, but it is popularly supposed amongst the Arabs themselves, that, at first, whiter than milk, it grew black long since by the touch of an impure woman, or, as others proclaim, by the sins of mankind. The more reasonable amongst the sons of the desert, however, hold, what is probably the case,



BLACK STONE.

that the inside is still white, the colour of the exterior being the result of the touches and kisses of countless devotees ; a theory which is confirmed by the experience of a recent traveller, who was bold enough to scratch the surface of the Holy Stone. It is surrounded on all sides by a border composed of a substance like pitch, mixed with gravel, of a similar but slightly different brownish colour. This border, which serves to support its detached pieces, is two or three inches in breadth and rises a little above the surface of the stone. Both the border and the stone itself are encircled by a silver band, wider below than above, and as regards two sides with a considerable swelling below, as if a part

of the stone were hidden under it. The lower portion of the border is studded with silver nails.

It is asserted by Sale that when the Karmathians, a sect which rose to power about A.H., 278 (A.D. 891), took away the Black Stone, they could not be prevailed on for love or money to restore it, though the people of Mecca offered no less than 5,000 pieces of gold for the precious charm. After, however, keeping the relic for twenty-two years, seeing that they could not thereby draw the pilgrims from Mecca, they, of their own accord, sent back to them the worthless burden, at the same time openly declaring it not to be the true stone. It was, however, proved to be no counterfeit, so runs the legend, by its peculiar quality of swimming on the water! It is contended by Muslims, that at the Day of Judgment this stone, then endowed with sight and speech, will bear witness in favour of all those who have touched it with sincere hearts.

In another corner of the Kaba there is a second stone about 5 feet from the ground: it is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet in length and 2 inches in breadth, placed upright, and is merely common Mecca stone. As the people walk round they touch this emblem with their right hand, while others, more zealous than correct, occasionally kiss it.

The four sides of the Kaba are covered with a black silk stuff hanging down and leaving the roof bare, but secured at the bottom to the metal rings in the basement. This covering is known as the "Kiswa," an Arabic word which signifies a "robe or habit." On it are various prayers interwoven in the same colour as the stuff itself, while a little above the middle, and running round the whole building, is a zone composed of five pieces of the same material as the covering, sewn together so as to form one continuous band. This is also decorated with inscriptions in gold, the characters, which are large and elegant, being surrounded by a band of the same metal. At the end where the

borders unite, there is a plentiful array of green and red silk. On the first and second pieces is inscribed in letters of gold worked into red silk, the "Throne" verselet from the Quran, and on the third and fourth the title of the reigning Sultan. That part of the "Kiswa" which covers the door is richly embroidered with gold and silver, and lined with green silk, openings being left for the black stone and the other stone, both of which thus remain uncovered. The gold-embroidered curtain which conceals the entrance is called by the learned Burqau'l Kaba the "Kaba's face-veil," though the vulgar, connecting it in some way with the Prophet's daughter, term it "Burqa Fatima." Some, however, maintain that the popular appellation is derived from the circumstance that a certain person of that name, the wife of Sultan As Salih, was the first person who sent a veil of this kind to cover the door of the Kaba. The origin of this latter curious custom is ascribed by Burton to the practice of typifying the church visible by a virgin or bride, an idea which has found its way into the poetry of the East, wherein this sacred object of veneration is elegantly styled "Mecca's Bride." It is also worthy of remark that the "Holy of Holies" is guarded by Eunuchs, just as would be the case were it the abode of fair damsels, who amongst the richer classes are universally surrounded in the East by a band of those hideous monstrosities.

"The black colour of the 'Kiswa,'" says Buckhardt, "covering a large cube in the midst of a vast square, gives to the Kaba, at first sight, a very singular and imposing appearance. As it is not fastened down tightly, the slightest breeze causes it to move in slow undulations which are hailed with prayers by the congregation assembled around the building, as a sign of the presence of its guardian angels, whose wings, by their motion, are supposed to be the cause of the waving of the covering. 70,000 angels have the Kaba in their holy care, and are ordered to transport it to Paradise when the trumpet of the Last Judgment shall be sounded."

The Meccan temple was first dressed as a mark of honour by a certain Tobba the Himyarite, and the custom was preserved from his day amongst the Arabs, who, however, did not remove the old covering when placing a new one, till at length the weight threatened to crush the building. At the time of Qussai the Kaba was veiled by subscription, till one Abu Rabi'atu'l Mughayrah lin Abdullah, who had acquired great wealth by commerce, offered to provide the "Kiswa" on alternate years, an act of piety which gained for the zealous votary the name of "al Adl" or "the Just One." The Prophet of Arabia directed that the covering should be of fine Yaman cloth, and the expense thereof paid out of the public treasury. The Khalif Omar, on the other hand, preferred Egyptian linen, and ordered that the "Kiswa" should be removed every year, and the old veil be distributed among the pilgrims. In the reign of Othman the Holy of Holies was twice clothed, in winter and summer respectively, receiving in the former season a shirt of brocade, with a veil, and in the latter a suit of fine linen. Muawiya at first supplied linen and brocade, but he subsequently exchanged the former for striped Yaman stuff, and further directed that the walls should be cleaned and perfumed. At this period, too, the custom originated by the Khalif Omar of dividing the old "kiswa" among the pilgrims became confirmed; it had been at first proposed to bury the disused covering that it might not be worn by the impure, whereupon Ayisha, the wife of the Prophet suggested that it should be sold and the proceeds distributed amongst the poor. The Meccans, however, followed the first half of the proposal emanating from the "Mother of the Muslims," but neglected the rest of the injunction. In recent years the old "Kiswa" has not unfrequently been the perquisite of the tribe which have the custody of the Holy Temple, who do not scruple to "turn an honest penny" by the sale of the precious relic. As a matter of fact, however, the fees which the pious pilgrim is, as a rule,



only too pleased to give for so sacred a memento of a visit to the Mosque generally fall to the lot of the "Dalils" or guides, to whom reference has been already made.

Strictly speaking, the embroidered cloth which hangs over the door of the shrine, and the belt or zone on which the name of the Emperor of Constantinople is inscribed, belong to the Grand Sharif of Mecca ; while of the rest one half goes to the keeper of the key, and the remainder to the slaves employed in the Temple. Once in seven years, when the "Feast of Sacrifices" falls on a Friday, the "Kiswa" is sent in its entirety to the Sultan of Turkey.

In the ninth century the dress was changed three times a year, viz., on the 10th of Muharram, when it was red brocade, on the 1st of Rajjab, on which occasion it was fine linen, and on the 1st Shavval, when it was white brocade. It was found, however that the covering got spoilt by the pilgrims, whereupon two veils were supplied, and the brocade shirt was let down as far as the pavement, but in the end a new veil was sent every two months. During the Khalifate of the Abbasides this investiture came to signify sovereignty in the Hijaz, which passed alternately from Baghdad to Egypt and Yaman. In the twelfth century the "Kiswa" was composed of black silk, and renewed by the Khalif of Baghdad annually, but it was afterwards green and gold. During the next century, two villages were assigned by the Sultans of Egypt for the purpose of defraying the expenses attendant on providing a black covering for the outside of the Kaba, the inside of which, now, for the first time, was decked with a "Kiswa," the colour selected being red : hangings, too, were sent for the Prophet's tomb at Madina. When the Holy Land fell under the power of the Turks, in the sixteenth century, considerable sums were devoted for the expenses of the "Kiswa," the colour of which was retained as before, black ; the custom was also established that the inner "Kiswa" should be renewed at the accession of each Sultan. Regular rules were also instituted

regarding the outer covering, which henceforth was taken off on the 25th Zu'l qada, the building is then left "Uryana," or naked, for the period of fifteen days, till the 10th Zu'l Hijja, the first day of the great festival of the pilgrimage. This is done annually in consequence of the injury which the old curtain suffers from exposure to the weather, &c.

The outer "Kiswa" is worked at a cotton manufactory, "al Khurunfish" at Cairo, by a hereditary family known as the Baitu'l Sadi. Its texture is of coarse silk mixed with cotton, this latter being introduced in consequence of the Muslim prohibition against the use of stuff composed of pure silk. The veil of the temple, which is composed of eight pieces, two for each face of the Kaba, the seams being concealed by the zone or girdle, is lined with white calico, and supplied with cotton ropes. There is a tradition that in days gone by all the Quran was interwoven into the "Kiswa." At the present day the inscriptions are: a verse which in English runs, "Verily the first of houses founded for mankind is that at Bakka; blessed and a direction to all creatures"; added to this there are seven chapters from the same sacred work, namely the Cave, Mariam, the Family of Imran, Repentance, T. H., Tabarruk, and Y. S. The character of the writing is the largest style of Eastern caligraphy and is legible from a considerable distance.

When the "Kiswa" is ready at Khurunfish it is carried in procession to the Mosque Al Hasanain, at Cairo, where it is lined, sewn, and prepared for the journey. At the time of the departure of the great caravan of pilgrims from Egypt the veil is borne upon a high flattish frame of wood, termed "Kajawa" and packed on the back of a fine camel; a procession is then formed, composed of numerous companies of dar-wishes with their banners and "shalishes," the latter being a pole about twenty feet in length, like a large flag-staff, with a huge conical ornament of brass on the top. Some of the people also carry flags inscribed with the profession of their faith, "There is no God

but God and Muhammad is his Apostle," or with quotations from the Quran ; sometimes, too, there are to be seen the names of the Prophets and the founders of the various orders which bear the banners. Occasionally some of the darwishes carry nets of various colours extended upon a frame-work of hoops, to denote the origin of their fraternity as fishermen. But the most curious part of the procession is in no way connected with religion or pious zeal. Quite otherwise, for it consists in a mock combat between two men armed with swords and shields, while in another direction may be seen a fantastically dressed "Mulla" clothed in sheep-skin, and wearing a high skin cap, as well as a grotesque false beard, composed of short pieces of cord or twist, apparently of wool, with moustachios formed of two long brown feathers. This *soi-disant* priest pretends from time to time to write judicial decisions, known in the East as "fatwas," the paper being supplied by the spectators who flock around him. But a more remarkable group in the procession yet remains to be noticed, consisting of several darwishes, of the sect of the Rifais, called "Aulad Ilwan," each of whom bears in his hand an iron spike about a foot in length, with a ball of the same metal at the thick end, having a number of small and short chains attached to it. To appearance these individuals thrust the spike in their eyes, and withdraw it without showing any mark of injury. The recompense for this piece of jugglery, for such it is, though the spectators are never disposed to acknowledge the deception, is but a few small coins or a pipeful of tobacco. The procession of the "Kiswa" takes place about three weeks before that of the Mahmil, which latter will be subsequently described, though on reaching Arafat near Mecca, and indeed sometimes shortly after starting, the two are not infrequently united in order to add to the dignity and importance of the show. Sometimes, also, a further oblong curtain of black material, embroidered with gold, is borne in the procession being destined to cover the "Maqam Ibrahim" in the Holy City.

The interior of the Kaba consists of a single room, the roof of which is supported by two columns, there being no other light but what is received through the door. The ceiling, the upper half of the two columns, and the side walls to within about five feet of the floor, are hung with a thick stuff of red silk richly interwoven with flowers and inscriptions in large characters of silver; this latter, as previously stated, is renewed on the accession of each Sultan of Turkey, but *not annually*, as is the case with the outer covering. The lower part of each of the above-mentioned columns is lined with carved aloe-wood, in contradistinction to that part below the silk hangings, where it is fine white marble ornamented with inscriptions, cut in relief, and with elegant arabesques, the whole being of exquisite workmanship. The floor, which as previously stated is level with the door, and therefore about seven feet above the area of the Mosque, is inlaid with marble of different colours. Between the pillars numerous lamps are suspended; these, which are donations of the faithful, are said to be made of solid gold, though there is a tradition that once upon a time the Shaikhs of Mecca, tempted by the prize, stole these costly relics, and conveyed them away in the wide sleeves of their gowns; but for the credit of Arab integrity no less than Muslim zeal for the House of their God, it may be hoped that this is but a lying legend of an embittered enemy.

The key of the Kaba is placed in a bag made indifferently in one of three colours, red, black, or green; the material being silk embroidered with golden letters, which latter form the word "Bismillah" (in the name of God), the name of the reigning Sultan, an Arabic sentence proclaiming the circumstance that it is "the bag of the key of the Holy Kaba," and a verselet from the Quran, entitled the "Family of Imran." The bag is made at the same place as the "Kiswa."

The temple is partly surrounded at some distance by an enclosure in the shape of an irregular oval, composed of thirty-two slender gilt pillars connected at the base

by a low balustrade, and at the top by bars of silver. Between every two of these are suspended seven glass lamps, which are always lighted after sunset. There is also a good pavement of marble, about eight inches below the level of the great square. This structure was erected A.H. 981 (A.D. 1573), by order of the Sultan of Turkey. Beyond this there is a second pavement, about twelve feet broad, somewhat elevated above the first, but of coarser work; then another six inches higher, and twenty-seven feet broad, upon which stand several small buildings; further on than this the ground is gravelled, so that two broad steps may be said to lead down to the Kaba.

There are several holy spots and venerated relics in the vicinity of the Holy of Holies. Of these little more than a bare enumeration must suffice. The four "Maqams" or "buildings," where the Imams of the orthodox Muhammadan sects, the Hanifites, Malikites, Hambalites and Shafites, take their station, and lead prayers for the congregation. The Maqam Ibrahim, said to contain the sacred stone upon which Abraham stood when he built the Kaba, and which, with the help of his son Ishmael, he removed from the spot where he is supposed to have kneaded the chalk and mud required for his work, is also sacred in the eyes of the Muslims. The "Mimbar" or pulpit of the Mosque constructed of fine white marble with many sculptured ornaments; it dates back to A.H. 969 (A.D. 1561). The "Myzab" is the spout through which the rain-water collected on the roof of the Kaba is discharged upon Ishmael's grave, where pilgrims are wont to stand to catch the precious liquid. This contrivance, which is about four feet in length and six inches in breadth, was sent from Constantinople in A.H. 981 (A.D. 1573) and is reported to be of pure gold.

No account of the temple at Mecca would be complete without an allusion to the famous well "*Zamzam*," the waters of which are held in the highest esteem, being used for drinking purposes and religious

ablutions, but not for any baser objects. It is also sent in bottles to most parts of the Muslim world as a memento of the Holy Mosque. The Muhammadans contend that it is the identical spring which gushed out when Hagar was wandering in the desert with her son Ishmael, and some supposed that, when she spied the water, she called out in the Egyptian tongue, "Zam, Zam!" that is, "stay, stay!" Others, however, incline to the idea that the name takes its origin from the murmuring of the waters, the sound being rudely depicted by the two syllables in question. The matter must, however, remain unsettled, as it is impossible to solve the point beyond the pale of doubt. It is interesting to know that the water is said to be most efficacious on the 15th of the month Shaban, the 21st, 23rd, 25th and 27th Ramazan, the 1st and 7th Shavval, and the 10th Muharram.

Allusion must not be omitted to the sacred pigeons which congregate on the Mosque at Mecca, the "doves of the Kaba," as they are called. These birds are held in sacred reverence, never being killed for food, as elsewhere is the case. Various reasons have been assigned for the veneration with which they are regarded, the most plausible theory being that propounded by Burton, that it is connected with the tradition of the Arabs in regard to Noah's dove.

The cleansing of the sacred edifice occurs three times a year, and the mode of doing it is as follows:—The Grand Sharif and the Pasha (of whom hereafter) having each fastened round their waist a shawl, accompanied by two or three slaves and the "key bearer," enter the shrine, which they first wash thrice over, including walls, floor, pillars and ceiling, the third time using rose-water, then they rub the walls with sandal-wood, and "itr" (scent), and afterwards they fumigate it with incense. The waste water is collected by the people in phials, &c., and preserved as a charm, or treasured as a sacred gift for their intimate friends and kindred on return home from the pilgrimage to Mecca. Of the

shawls used by the Grand Sharif and Pasha during the process one is given to the Keeper of the Key, and the other to the slaves. For sweeping out the shrine small brushes are used, which are afterwards thrown away outside; but even these are picked up by the people as sacred relics of the holy building. The dates on which this purification takes place are 20th Rabi'u'l Avval, 20th Zu'lqada and 12th Muharram.

The temple of Mecca has been an object of veneration amongst the Arabs from time immemorial. Indeed, an antiquity is claimed for it dating back 2,000 years before the creation! The tradition runs, that when the Almighty informed the celestial throng of Angels that he was about to send a vicegerent on earth they deprecated the design. "God knoweth what ye know not," was the gentle reproof. Allah thereupon created a building in Heaven with four jasper pillars and a ruby roof, which done, he ordered the angels to make a like edifice for man on earth. According to some authorities this latter house is supposed to have been erected by Adam when first he appeared on the earth, while others are of opinion that it was not constructed till after his expulsion from the Garden of Eden, when, no longer able to hear the prayers of the angels, he was mercifully allowed a place of worship in which he might pay his devotions to his Creator. On Adam's death his tabernacle was taken to heaven—so say the Muslim legends, and a building composed of stone and mud was placed in its stead by his son Seth. Some hold the view that this later Kaba was destroyed by the deluge, while others declare that the pillars were allowed to remain. Information regarding the fourth house is more precise. Abraham and his son were ordered to erect an edifice upon the old foundations. It is supposed to have been of an irregular shape, without a roof, but with two doors level with the ground, and a hole for treasure in the interior. Gabriel brought the black stone from the mountains *where it had been stored up*, and Abraham thereupon,

by direction of his angelic visitor, placed it in its present corner to mark the spot where the complicated rites of pilgrimage, into which the patriarch was then initiated, should begin.

The Amalika, or descendants of Sam the son of Noah, who settled near Mecca, raised the fifth house. The sixth was built about the Christian era by the Bani Jorham, the first of the Hebrews to abandon their mother tongue, and adopt the dialect of the Arabs from amongst whom their founder had married a wife.

The celebrated Qussai, the forefather (in the fifth generation) of the Prophet built the seventh house according to the design which Abraham had previously adopted. He roofed it over with palm leaves, and stocking it with idols, induced his tribe to settle in its vicinity.

This last-mentioned place of worship was accidentally burnt down by a woman's censer, which set fire to the "Kiswa," or covering, and to complete the destruction the walls were destroyed by a torrent. The Quraish, who rebuilt the house, were assisted by the crew of a merchant ship wrecked at Jedda, while the vessel itself afforded material for the roof. But lacking money they curtailed its proportions, though at the same time they doubled the height of the walls; they also built a staircase in the northern side, closed the western door, and placed the eastern porch above the ground to prevent men entering without leave. It is said that while digging the foundations the workmen came to a green stone, like a camel's hunch, which when struck with a pickaxe sent forth blinding lightning, and prevented further excavation. This house was built during the time of the Prophet of Arabia, who, as has been explained, was called upon to settle a dispute amongst the tribes as to the position of the Black Stone.

In A.H. 64 (A.D. 683) Abdullah bin Zubayr, nephew of the Prophet's widow, Ayisha, rebuilt the House of God, for the ninth occasion, its predecessor having been injured by fire which burnt the covering, besides split-



ting the Black Stone into three pieces.] The edifice was, on this occasion, made of cut stone and fine lime, brought from Yaman. Abdullah lengthened the building by 7 cubits, and added 9 cubits to its height, which was thereupon 27 cubits. He also roofed over the whole, reopened the western door, supported the interior with a single row of three columns, instead of the double row of six placed there by the Quraish. When finished it was perfumed internally and externally, and invested with brocade, after which Abdullah and all the citizens, going forth in procession, slew 100 victims, and rejoiced with great festivities. In the course of a decade (A.H. 74 = A.D. 623) it was ruled that Abdullah had made unauthorized additions to, and changes in, certain of the more sacred portions of the House, and one Hajjaj bin Yusuf was charged to rebuild the edifice, the tenth of the series, one and all of which had failed to resist the attacks of fate. The greater part of the present building dates from the period of this latter house, but on Tuesday, 20 Shaban A.H. 1030 (A.D. 1620), a violent storm swept away the Mosque, while the waters, rising above the threshold of the Kaba, carried away the lamp-posts, the Maqam Ibrahim, all the northern wall of the house, half of the eastern and one third of the western side. The repairs, which were so considerable that some authorities deem them to constitute the eleventh house, were not finished till upwards of ten years. It may be added that the Khalifu'r Harun Rashid wished to rebuild the House of God, but was forbidden by the Imam Malik.

The sanctity of the Kaba is, of course, a fundamental article of belief with every pious Muslim, and as might have been expected, no effort has been spared to prove to mankind how the Almighty has blessed the House where His honour dwelleth. The signs of divine favour—in themselves curious and interesting—are thus summarized by Captain Burton, from whose well-known work many of the particulars as to the Baitullah have been gathered.

"The preservation of the Hajarul Aswad, and the Maqam Ibrahim, from many foes, and the miracles put forth (as in the war of the Elephant) to defend the house; the violent and terrible deaths of the sacrilegious, and the fact that, in the Deluge, the large fish did not eat the little fish in the Haram. A wonderful desire and love impel men from distant regions to visit the holy spot; and the first sight of the Kaba causes awe and fear, horripilation and tears. Furthermore, ravenous beasts will not destroy their prey in the sanctuary land, and the pigeons and other birds never perch upon the house, except to be cured of sickness, for fear of defiling the roof. The Kaba, though small, can contain any number of devotees.\* No one is ever hurt in it,† and invalids renew their health by rubbing themselves against the 'Kiswa,' and the Black Stone. Finally it is observed that every day 100,000 mercies descend upon the house, and especially that if rain come up from the northern corner there is plenty in Iraq, if from the south, there is plenty in Yaman, if from the east, plenty in India, if from the western, there is plenty in Syria, and if from all four angles, general plenty is presignified."

The pilgrimage must be performed between the seventh and tenth days of the month Zu'l Hijja, a visit to Mecca at any other time not having the full merit attaching to that act of piety if undertaken at the enjoined period. Hence the Muhammadan year being lunar, while the seasons are regulated by the sun, the time of the "Hajj" varies every twelvemonth, and occurs in spring, summer, autumn, or winter, as the case may be, the entire change being completed during a cycle of thirty-two years. This<sup>1</sup> year (1886) the pilgrimage will commence on September 6.

The ceremony is of three kinds: (1) the lesser pilgrimage (Umra), performed at any time save the appointed season; (2) the simple pilgrimage (Hajj),

\* According to Burckhardt the Baitullah will contain 35,000 persons, but there are not generally more than 10,000 to be seen therein.

† This fact is disputed by Burton, who said that the Mosque is hardly ever opened without some accident happening.

undertaken at the appointed period ; and (3) the greater pilgrimage (Hajju'l Akbar), the usual "Hajj" carried into execution when the day of "'Arafat" (of which more anon) falls on a Friday.

As regards the lesser pilgrimage it is only necessary to state that it is generally confined to a journey to a mosque about six miles from Mecca, whence, after a prayer, the votary repairs to the Holy City and performs the "Tawaf" and "Sai" (to be hereafter described); he then shaves his head, lays aside his pilgrim's garb (Ihram), and all is finished. This act of piety and devotion may be performed at any season of the year, but it is considered especially meritorious during the sacred month "Rajab," which forms a break in the middle of the eight secular months.

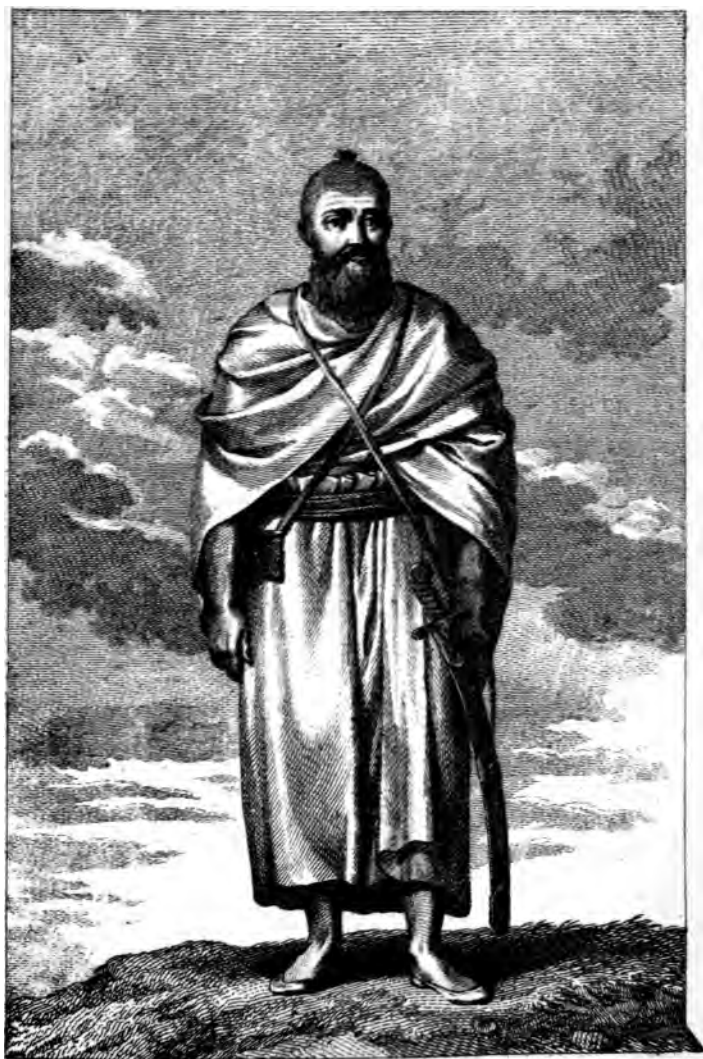
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Sir W. Muir says that, "according to the rules of Islam, the pilgrim must resolve before he assumes the pilgrim garb which pilgrimage he will perform."

The Musulman who has performed the pilgrimage is called "Haji."

Upon the votary's arrival at the last stage (of which there are five), about five or six miles from Mecca, he bathes himself and assumes the sacred robe which is called "Ihram." This latter, however, may be taken into wear at other spots, the farther from Mecca the greater the merit; consequently some poor wretches from India and Egypt travel the whole journey in this

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*The Shram-Male.*





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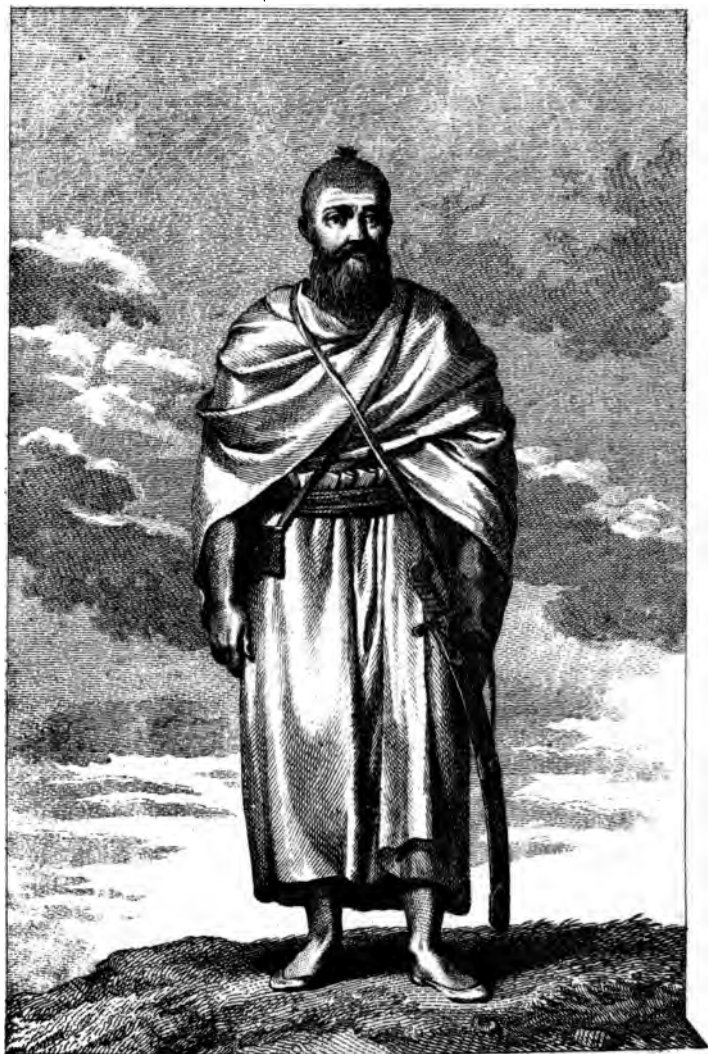
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*The Shram-Mate.*

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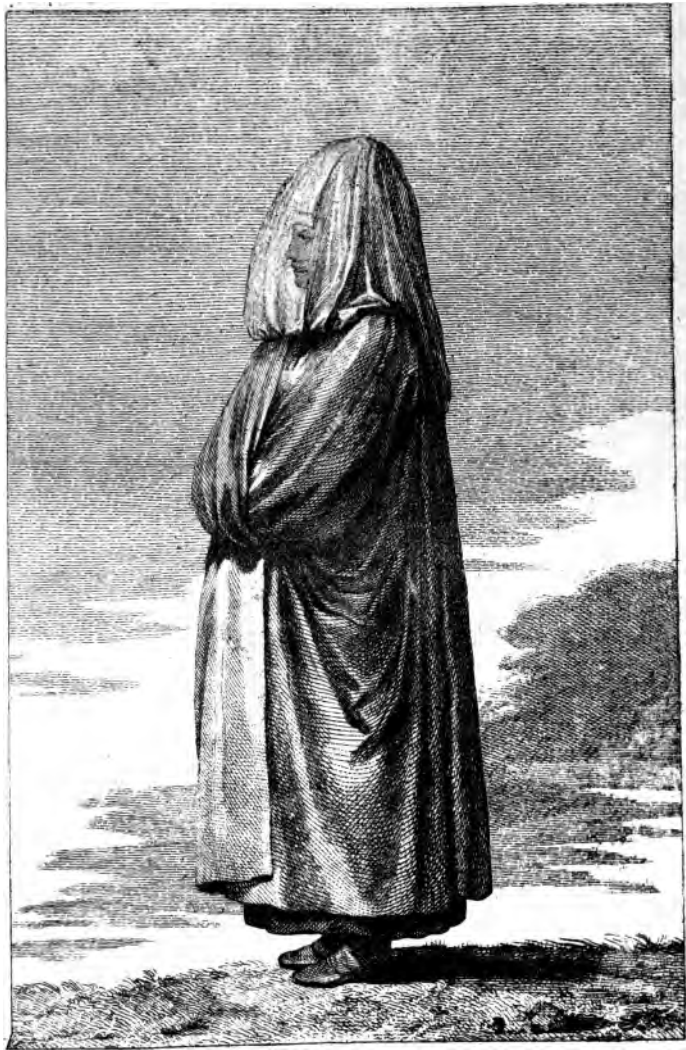


*The Shram-Females.*

Hindustan array themselves in their befitting costume the day previous to their arrival at Jedda. The "Ihram" consists of two new cotton seamless cloths, each six feet long by three and a half broad, the colour being white with narrow red stripes and fringes. One of these garments, called "Izar," is wrapped round the loins from the waist to the knee, and knotted or tucked in at the middle; the other, known as the "Radha," which is knotted at the right side, being thrown loosely over the back, exposing the arm and shoulder, while leaving the head uncovered. It is allowable, however, to carry an umbrella, should health require such a protection against the weather. Women dispense with the "Ihram," some attiring themselves in the veil usually worn by their sex in the East, while others put on, for the occasion, a large white veil in which they envelop themselves down to their feet. The veils, in common with the "Ihrams" worn by the men, being sanctified by use, are religiously kept by pilgrims during their life, in order to serve at death as winding-sheets for the corpse of the pious owners.

Nothing is allowed upon the instep, a prohibition which precludes the use of shoes or boots. To meet the requirements of the case sandals are made at Mecca expressly for the pilgrimage. The poorer classes cut off the upper leather of an old pair of shoes. After the pilgrims have assumed the garb enjoined by the Prophet, they must not anoint their head, shave any part of the body, pare the nails, or wear any other garment than that described above, even scratching is not permissible, lest perchance vermin be destroyed, or a hair uprooted; accordingly, it is a general practice to call the "barber" into requisition immediately before donning the "Ihram," the head is then shaved, the nails are cut, and the mustachios trimmed—thus much for the men; the weaker sex gather up their hair and cut off about four fingers' length. It is further forbidden, while clad in the garment of sanctity, to hunt wild animals, or to kill those

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which were such originally ; but the pilgrim may destroy five noxious creatures, viz., kites, crows, rats, scorpions, and dogs given to biting. Trees are to be spared, as also self-growing plants, but it is allowable to cut grass. For each infraction of these ordinances it is incumbent to sacrifice a sheep as an indication that the offender is worthy of death.

After the toilet is completed the pilgrim, turning the face in the direction of Mecca, says aloud some Arabic words, which may be rendered, "I vow this Ihram of Hajj and the Umra to Allah Almighty." It is also customary at this stage to raise the "Talbiya"—literally translated it runs thus :

"Here I am, O Allah ! here am I,  
No partner hast Thou, here am I,  
Verily praise and beneficence are thine, and the kingdom,  
No partner hast Thou, here am I."

Immediately on arrival at Mecca the pilgrim performs the legal ablutions. Entering the Holy City by day and on foot, a visit is at once paid to the sacred mosque, taking care that when the glance first alights upon the "Kaba" (Holy of Holies), the following or some similar words are uttered : "O Allah ! increase this Thy house in degree and greatness and honour and awfulness, and increase all those who have honoured it and glorified it, the Hajis and Mutamirs [Umra performers], with degree and greatness and honour and dignity." A visit is next paid to the "Black Stone," which is touched with the right hand, and then reverently kissed ; that done the "Kaba" is encompassed seven times. This latter act, called "Tawaf," is performed, commencing on the right and leaving the Holy of Holies on the left, the circuits being made thrice with a quick step or run, and four times at a slow pace. These processions are supposed to take their origin from the motions of the planets. The votary then repairs to the "Maqam Ibrahim," a *hal-  
lowed and venerated spot* in the temple of Mecca, and

utters two prayers, after which steps are retraced to the "Black Stone," which is once again devoutly kissed. It should be stated that the devotions are performed silently by day, and aloud at night.

All visitors do not enter the "Kaba"; indeed, there is a tradition that Muhammad himself, on being questioned as to the reason why he had passed the sacred portal, replied: "I have this day done a thing which I wish I had left undone. I have entered the Holy House, and haply some of my people, pilgrims, may not be able to enter therein, and may turn back grieved in heart; and, in truth, the command given to me was only to encircle the Kaba, it is not incumbent on any one to enter it." Those, however, who elect to tread the hallowed floor, are mulcted in a nominal fee, equivalent to about four shillings per head, but the charge by no means exhausts the demands on the pilgrim's purse. Moreover, after visiting the sacred precincts a person is bound, amongst other things, never again to walk barefooted, to take up fire with the fingers, or to tell an untruth. The last mentioned is indeed "a consummation most devotedly to be hoped for," seeing that lying is to an Oriental "meat and drink and the roof that covers him." It may here be mentioned that the Kaba is opened free to all comers about ten or twelve times in each year, while on other occasions the pilgrims have to collect amongst themselves a sum sufficient to tempt the guardians' cupidity. The mosque itself, there being no doors to the gateway, is open at all times, and the people of Mecca love to boast that at no hour neither by day or night is the temple without a votary to perform the "Tawaf."

The pilgrim afterwards repairs to the gate of the temple leading to Mount Safa, whence, ascending the hill and raising the cry of "Takbir" (praise to God), it is incumbent to implore pardon for past sins. This done, a descent is made preparatory to a clamber up the hill of Marwa, a proceeding called "As Sai" (*running*), and repeated several times. The prayer used on



this occasion is as follows : "O my Lord, pardon and pity and pass over that sin which Thou knowest ; verily Thou knowest what is not known, and verily Thou art the Most Glorious, the Most Generous. O our Lord ! grant us in this world prosperity, and in the future prosperity, and save us from the punishment of fire." It is usual, in the case of male pilgrims, to run between Safa and Marwa, because Hagar the mother of Ishmael when in these parts is supposed to have sped in haste searching after water to preserve the life of herself and her hapless infant ; but, notwithstanding the example thus set by one of their own sex, the women as a rule walk the distance. Some, however, are of opinion that the custom of running arose from the circumstance that on one occasion the infidel Meccans mocked the companions of the Prophet, and said that the climate of Madina had made them weak, whereupon this vigorous method was adopted to disprove the calumny.

The eighth of the month Zu'l Hijja is called "Tarwiya" (carrying water), and is probably commemorative of the circumstance that in the pagan period the Arabs used to spend their time in providing themselves with this necessary of life. On this day the worshipper unites with fellow pilgrims at a spot called Mina, in performing the usual services of the Muslim ritual, and stays the night at the last-mentioned locality. On the morning of the ninth, a rush is made to Mount Arafat, a holy hill which, says Burton—

"Owes its name and honours to a well-known legend. When our first parents forfeited heaven by eating wheat, which deprived them of their primeval purity, they were cast down upon earth. The serpent descended at Ispahan, the peacock at Kabul, Satan at Bilbays (others say Sennar or Seistan), Eve upon Arafat, and Adam at Ceylon. The latter, determining to seek his wife, began a journey to which earth owes its present mottled appearance. Wherever our first father placed his foot—which was large—a town afterwards arose, while between the strides will always be a 'country.' *Wandering for many years he came to the mountain of mercy, where*

our common mother was continually calling upon his name, and their recognition gave the place the name of Arafat. Upon its summit Adam, instructed by the archangel, erected a 'Madah,' or place of prayer; and between the spot and the 'Nimra' Mosque the pair abode till death. Others declare that after recognition the first pair returned to India, whence for forty-four years in succession they visited the Holy City at pilgrimage time."

At Mount Arafat, after first performing early worship at the time of morn, when "a man cannot see his neighbour's face," the votary on arrival says two prayers with the Imam (priest), and hears the "Khutba" or sermon (which generally lasts three hours!), the preacher all the while holding in his left hand a short staff, probably emblematical of the early days of Islam, when a sword was carried as a protection against surprise. Those present, to the tune, it is said, of 70,000 souls of all nationalities, speaking as many as forty different languages, appear before the priest in ordinary clothes, the "Ihram" being laid aside for the occasion; any deficiency in number is supplied, it is said, by angels from heaven. This act of devotion is so all-important, that if the luckless pilgrim be too late to listen to the homily the labour of the journey is irretrievably lost. There must also be abundant supplication, while they who repeat 11,000 times the chapter of the Quran commencing, "Say He is our God," will obtain from Allah all that is desired!

When the sermon is finished the votary waits till sunset, preparatory to a visit to the Holy Hill. It is thought meritorious to accelerate the pace on quitting the mountain of Eve, and a strange race therefore ensues, called by the Arabs "Ad dafa' Min 'Arafat" (the pushing from Arafat). It may well be imagined that a huge camp 3 or 4 miles long and from 1 to 2 miles in breadth cannot pass through a comparatively narrow gorge without affrays occurring, and on some occasions as many as 200 lives have been lost. It is a truly remarkable scene; innumerable torches are lighted

twenty-four being carried by the grandees, soldiers fire their muskets, martial bands play, sky-rockets are thrown into the air, and all the while the "Hajj" proceeds at a quick pace in the greatest disorder, amidst a deafening clamour, through the Pass of Mazinmain *en route* to Muzdalifa, at which latter place each pilgrim picks up several small pebbles, and repeats the sunset and evening prayers, after his work is done for the night.

The next morning, or third day of the pilgrimage is the great "day of days," distinguished in the East by several names. The Turks call it "Qurban Bayram" (the sacrifice of Bayram); to the Indians it is known as "Baqr Id" (the kine fête); while the Arabs designate it indifferently, "Idu'l Qurban" (the feast of sacrifice), "Idu'l Azha" (the feast of the forenoon), and "Idu'l Akbar" (the great feast)—the last mentioned being perhaps most commonly in use. The festival, which embraces the slaughter of an animal without spot or blemish, is supposed to commemorate the sacrifice of Ishmael by Abraham, hence the name of Qurban (sacrifice) which it bears. It may be here explained that it is the commonly received opinion amongst the Muhammadans that the son whom the Patriarch offered was Ishmael not Isaac. Muslim commentators also assert that the "Friend of God" went so far as to draw the knife with all his strength across the lad's throat, but was miraculously hindered from hurting him. As regards the victim, some suppose it to have been a ram—the very same creature indeed which Abel sacrificed—this said animal having been brought for the occasion from Paradise. Others are of opinion that it was a wild goat, the horns of which were afterwards hung up on the spout of the Kaba, where they remained till the building was consumed by fire.

The pilgrim now proceeds to Mina, and repairs at once in succession to three places indicated by a like number of pillars, at each of which spots he takes one of the seven small stones brought from Muzdalifa, and *having repeated a particular prayer over the same,*

and blown upon it, he throws it at a pillar. When the largest is reached, the pilgrim exclaims as he casts the pebble, "In the name of Allah—Allah is almighty—I do this in hatred of the Fiend and his shame." This action is repeated till all the stones are used. This curious custom, known as "ramy" (the throwing of the pebbles), is supposed to have its origin in the circumstance that once upon a time the devil, in the shape of an elderly Shaikh, appeared successively to Adam, Abraham and Ishmael, but was driven back by the simple process, inculcated by the Angel Gabriel, of throwing stones about the size of a bean, a mode of exorcism fatal to the wiles of the enemy of mankind. The scene of these adventures is marked by pillars, one of which bears the characteristic appellation, "Shaitanu'l Kabir" (the Great Satan). Others incline to the view that Abraham, meeting the devil in this place, and being disturbed thereby in his devotions, and tempted to disobedience in the contemplated sacrifice of his son, was commanded by God to drive away the Fiend with stones. The "Shaitanu'l Kabir" is a dwarf buttress of rude masonry about eight feet high by ten and a half broad, placed against a rough wall of stones at the Meccan entrance to Mina. As each devotee strives to get as near to this pillar as possible before casting a stone thereat, fights and quarrels are of frequent occurrence, and many a broken limb or injured head betokens the pious zeal of the unhappy worshipper, whom no danger or difficulty can deter from carrying out to the letter the injunctions of the Prophet.

This dangerous ceremony finished, the pilgrim performs the usual sacrifice of the "Idu'l Azha" (feast of the forenoon). This is perhaps the most revolting spectacle which can well be pictured; thousands of animals are slaughtered in "the Devil's Punch Bowl," the number being variously estimated at from 80,000 to 200,000; the entrails are then cast about the valley in every direction, where they remain to rot and putrefy in the sun; the effluvium, as may be supposed, passes

imagination. In the midst of this loathesome scene may be beheld poor Hajjis collecting morsels of flesh with greedy avidity, while negroes and Indians not infrequently employ themselves in cutting the meat into slices and drying it for their travelling provision. Such are the horrors of the valley of Mina : a spot so wonderful that it is said occasionally to extend itself so as to provide room for the votaries present at the ceremonies of which it is annually the scene, while orthodox Muslims further assure us that vultures never carry off the slaughtered flesh, which, indeed, they piously leave for the destitute but zealous pilgrims ; not even a fly, too, will settle upon food sanctified to the use of religion. Unhappily the testimony of travellers conflicts with the truth of these miracles, which exist but in the imagination. It may be added that of late years provision is made for the burial of the carcasses instead of their being allowed to putrefy and fester on the surface of the ground.

The votary now gets shaved and the nails pared ; the religious garb is then removed and the "Hajj" is ended, the weary zealot being allowed a well-earned rest at Mecca during the ensuing three days, known as "Ayyamu'l Tashriq" (the days of drying up, *i.e.*, the blood of the sacrifice). Before, however, leaving Mecca the pilgrims should once more perform the circuit round the "Kaba," and throw seven stones at each of the sacred pillars. The total number of stones thrown differs somewhat among the various sects. The Shafis use forty-nine, *viz.*, seven on the tenth day, seven at each pillar (total twenty-one) on the eleventh day, and the same on the twelfth Zu'l Hijja. The Hanafis further throw twenty-one stones on the thirteenth of the month, thus raising the number to seventy. The first seven pebbles *must* be collected at Muzdalifa, but the rest may be taken from the Mina valley ; in any case, however, each stone should be washed seven times *prior* to its being thrown, and there must be a total of *not less than seven* for each pillar. The Hanafis attempt

to approach as near as possible to the devil pillar, while the Shafis are allowed more latitude, provided they do not exceed a limit of five cubits.

Ordinary pilgrims remain at Mecca from ten to fifteen days after the completion of all the requisite ceremonial. Some, however, stay for several months, while others again dwell there for years ; but residence at the Holy City is not encouraged by Muhammadan authorities, nominally on the ground that it tends to lessen the respect due to the House of God ; in reality however, the difficulty of sojourning for any lengthened period in a town so ill calculated to support a large population is probably the true cause of the objections raised against such a pious proceeding as remaining constantly in sight of the Holy of Holies.

There is a peculiar custom at Mecca, that if a person engages a house he is obliged to pay a full year's rent, even should but a few weeks remain till the expiry of the month Zu'l Hijja, which ends the Muhammadan year ; and not only so, but when this latter period arrives, the occupier has either to leave the house, or become liable for another year's rent ; so that not unfrequently a hapless tenant is compelled to pay two years' rent for the use of a house during the term of but a few weeks. On the occasion of the pilgrimage season houses are generally hired furnished for a few weeks ; but the poorer classes live in free-houses termed "Ribats," built by rich and pious votaries for the benefit of such of their fellow countrymen as cannot afford either to pay rent or to hire rooms ; it not unfrequently happens, however, that the purpose of the founder is defeated, owing to the circumstance that the occupier has to pay the manager for the privilege of living rent-free, and the highest bidder is pretty sure to win the day. Some ribats are reserved for the gentle sex. The principal of these houses belong to the Javanese authorities, the rulers of Haidarabad, Bhopal, &c. The welfare of the various peoples who flock to Mecca is further promoted by the presence of agents

charged with the duty of protecting the interests of the respective nations to which they belong. There is also a hospital ; but the accommodation is limited, and in spite of every precaution, the condition of the poor is most miserable. When they get ill, scarce a soul cares to attend to the hapless wretches, who cannot at times procure even that necessity of life, water ; weak, sick, ill-fed, and houseless, they drag on a miserable existence in the streets, till death puts an end to their troubles, which their fellow creatures are unable or unwilling to assuage.

After the pilgrimage is finished, a certain amount of time is consumed in collecting mementos of the "Hajj"; these are for the most part pieces of wood off the tree called "Pilu," which are well adapted for cleaning the teeth. "Lif," a kind of grass like silk thread, white, black and red antimony for the eyelids, barley of the species eaten by the Prophet, commonly grown in the valleys about Mecca and Madina, and dates from the latter city. After all these arrangements are completed, many of the Hajis betake themselves to the Mosque of the Prophet at Madina ; this act of piety, called "Ziarat" or "Visitation," is a practice of faith, and the most effectual way of drawing near to Allah through his messenger Muhammad ; though highly meritorious, it is none the less a voluntary undertaking, the choice being left to the individual's free will.

The Mosque of the Prophet at Madina is built on much the same plan as that at Mecca, though the dimensions are considerably smaller, the edifice being but 290 feet in length, and 229 in breadth. A minute description of the building scarcely seems necessary ; but it would not be possible to omit mention of the "Hujra," or sacred enclosure, a square building of black stones, supported by two pillars, in the interior of which structure are, it is alleged, the tombs of Muhammad and his two earliest friends and immediate successors, *Abu Bakr*, and *Omar*. In front of these sacred objects of veneration a curtain is drawn to the height of at

least 30 feet ; there is also a small gate always kept shut, no person being permitted under any pretence to enter within the holy precincts except the chief eunuchs, who take care of the place, and who at night put on the new curtains, which latter are sent from Constantinople whenever the old covering is decayed (according to some authorities this happens about once in six years), or when a new sultan ascends the throne. The old veils are sent to Constantinople, and serve to cover the tombs of the sultans and princes.

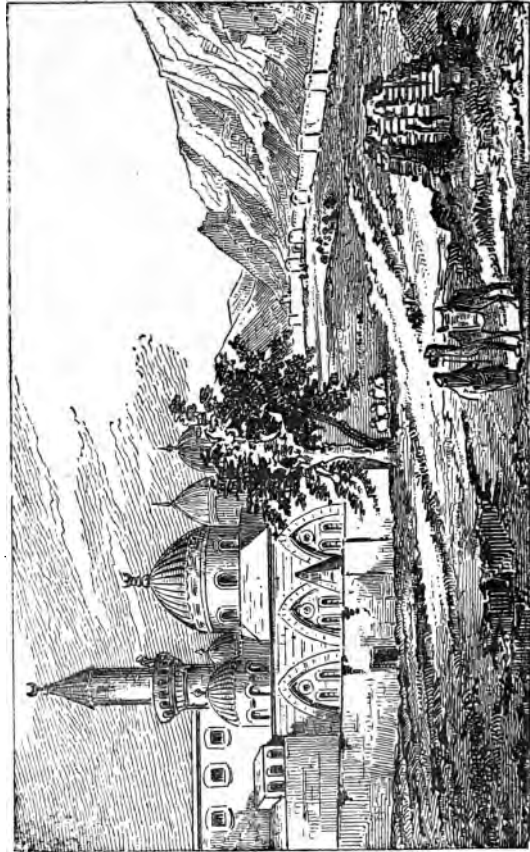
The temple was founded by Muhammad himself, who erected a small chapel on the spot where his camel had first rested in the town ; this building was made of mud walls, with a roof of palm leaves, supported by pillars composed of the stems of the same description of tree. During the first century and a half after his death, the edifice was enlarged by successive Khalifs, till it attained a considerable size and corresponding splendour. From A.H. 160 (A.D. 776) till A.H. 654 (A.D. 1256) the structure remained unaltered ; but in the latter year the Mosque caught fire, and was burnt to the ground, a calamity which occurred again in A.H. 886 (A.D. 1481), this time owing to its having been struck with lightning. The havoc was complete, the interior of the "Hujra" being the only portion which escaped destruction. The Mosque, as it now stands, was built in A.H. 892 (A.D. 1486) by Qaid Bey, King of Egypt, who sent 300 workmen from Cairo for that purpose ; but so great was the debris of the former building that it was with the greatest difficulty the original place of the Prophet's tomb could be ascertained. Since that date a few immaterial improvements have been made by the Emperors of Constantinople.

The ceremonies on visiting the Mosque are as follows :—

Before entering the town the pilgrim purifies himself with a total ablution, rubbing his body, if possible, with perfumes. Arrived in sight of the dome he utters some



pious ejaculations, after which the cicerone, or "Muzzavir," as he is here called, leads him to the gate known as "Babu's Salam," the threshold of which



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must be passed with the right foot foremost, a custom *general* as regards all Mosques, but especially insisted upon at Madina. Reciting some prayers as he walks,

the votary then makes his way to a particular spot, where he utters a short prayer and salutes the mosque with four prostrations, repeating two short chapters of the Quran, the 109th, entitled "The Unbelievers," and the 112th, which proclaims the Unity of God. The pilgrim now makes his way to the "Hujra," taking his stand beneath the western window, where, with arms half raised, he addresses his invocations to Muhammad, recapitulating as many as he can recollect of the ninety appellations, by which the Prophet is characterized, and prefixing to each a few words equivalent to "I salute thee." Next, intercession is made to Heaven on behalf of all those relatives and friends for whom it is considered desirable to pray, and finally a charitable hope is expressed that God will "destroy our enemies, and may the torments of Hell fire be their lot." It is in consequence of this custom that letters addressed to the people of Madina invariably conclude with a request that the writer's name may be mentioned at the Prophet's tomb.

After a few minutes spent in pressing the head close against the window in silent adoration, the visitor steps back and performs a prayer of four prostrations under a neighbouring colonnade; he then approaches the second window, on the same side, said to face the tomb of Abu Bakr, and repeats the procedure adopted on the first occasion. So also as regards the window where Omar is supposed to be buried. This done, the pilgrim betakes himself to another corner of the building, where the tomb of the daughter of Muhammad is situated; here, after four prostrations, a prayer is addressed to the "bright Fatima." Retracing his steps to the porch of departure, a prayer is uttered as a salutation to the Deity on leaving the Mosque. This completes the ceremony, which lasts about twenty minutes, and the votary is then at liberty to withdraw, not, however, without having paid his fee to the numerous individuals—alike men and women—who sit with handkerchiefs spread out to receive the gifts of the faithful.

According to Burckhardt, "the ceremonies may be repeated as often as the visitor wishes ; but few perform them all, except on arriving at Madina, and when on the point of departing. It is a general practice, however, to go every day at least once to the window opposite Muhammad's tomb, and recite there a short prayer. Many persons do it whenever they enter the Mosque. It is also a rule never to sit down in the Mosque for any of the usual daily prayers, without having previously addressed an invocation to the Prophet, with uplifted hands, and the face turned towards his tomb. A similar practice is prevalent in many other Mosques in the East, which contain the tomb of a saint. The Muslim divines affirm that prayers recited in the Mosque of Madina are peculiarly acceptable to the Deity, and incite the faithful to perform this pilgrimage by telling them that one prayer said in sight of the "Hujra" is as efficacious as 1,000 said in any other Mosque except that of Mecca."

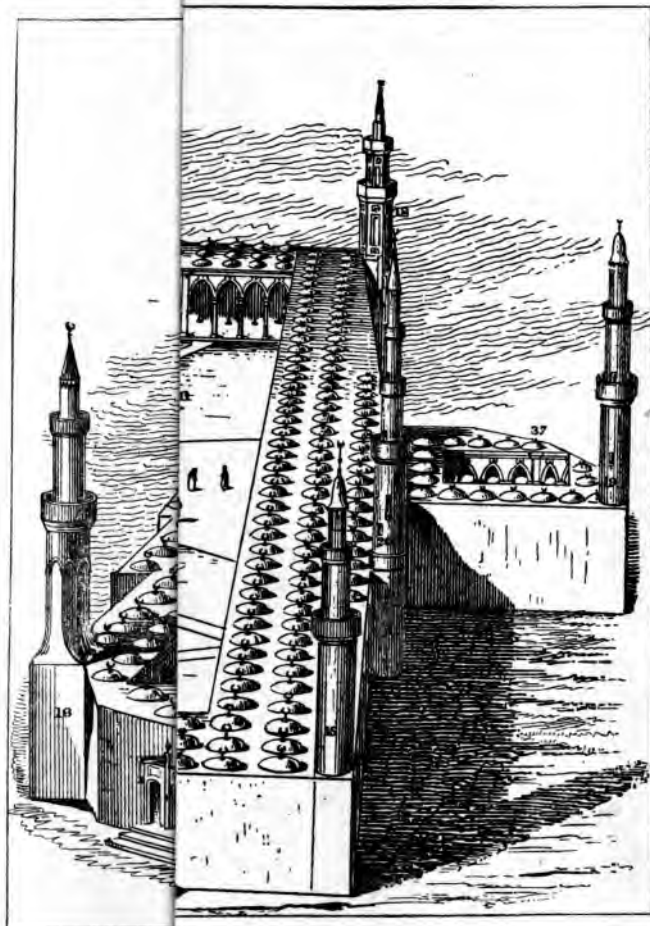
One peculiarity at Madina must not escape mention, to wit, that there are placed at the pulpit and in one or two other places in the Mosque large wax candles sent from Constantinople ; these, which are as thick as a man's body, and twelve feet high, are lighted in the evening by means of a ladder placed near them. The doors of the building are closed about three hours after sunset, and opened about an hour subsequent to dawn ; but those who wish to pray all night can easily obtain permission from the eunuch in charge, who sleeps near the "Hujra." During Ramazan the Mosque is kept open all night. It may be added that the whole charge of the sacred building is entrusted to about forty or fifty eunuchs, who are much respected in Madina, assuming in consequence airs of great importance—indeed, when they pass through the bazaar it is customary for persons to kiss these monsters' hands. They have large stipends, which are sent annually from Constantinople by the Syrian caravan, and they also share in all the donations made to the Mosque, while, in addition, they expect presents from every rich pilgrim, as well as fees from visitors to the "Hujra." These hideous creatures live

together in one of the best quarters of the city, and their houses are said to be furnished in the most costly and luxurious manner. One distinctive peculiarity attaches to Madina—Burckhardt's remarks in allusion to it are at once instructive and interesting.

“The mosque at Mecca is visited daily by female Hajis, who have their own station assigned to them. At Madina, on the contrary, it is thought very indecorous in women to enter the mosque. Those who come here from foreign parts visit the tomb during the night after the last prayer, while the women resident in the town hardly ever venture to pass the threshold; my old landlady, who had lived close to it for fifty years, assured me that she had been only once in her life within its precincts, and that females of a low character only are daring enough to perform their prayers there. In general, women are seldom seen in the mosques in the East, although free access is not forbidden. A few are sometimes met in the most holy temples, as that of “Azhar” at Cairo, where they offer up their thanks to Providence for any favour which they may have taken a vow thus to acknowledge. Even in their houses the women seldom pray, except devout old ladies, and it is remarked as an extraordinary accomplishment in a woman if she knows her prayers well, and has got by heart some chapters of the Quran, women being considered in the East as inferior creatures, to whom some learned commentators on the Quran deny even the entrance into Paradise; their husbands care little about their strict observance of religious rites, and many of them even dislike it, because it raises them nearer to a level with themselves, and it is remarked that the woman makes a bad wife who can once claim the respect to which she is entitled by the regular reading of prayers.”

Last, but perhaps not least, amongst the peculiarities of Madina, are the millions of animals of the most irritating description, who are only too happy to transfer their allegiance to any devout pilgrims who visit the mosque, be they rich or be they poor, for these creatures are no respecters of persons; nor does the evil end here, for the votary of necessity transfers these plagues to the lodging houses which there swarm with *vermin*.

Grandeess and persons of wealth make the journey to Mecca with a numerous array of servants and attendants, well supplied with all the good things of this world ; but the less pretentious and the humbler classes form companies of from fifteen to twenty persons, who travel together, thereby securing their safety, and saving their pockets. The whole cavalcade then generally makes a contract with some one to supply the caravan with animals as well as food and stores, the sum being stipulated before the start is commenced. Some three or four months prior to the period of the pilgrimage, these *entrepreneurs*, many of whom amass considerable fortunes, repair to the various villages and announce the approaching departure of the votaries : this is done by beat of drum, a sort of religious chant being sung at the same time, exhorting all faithful and pious Muslims to obey the injunctions of the Prophet. The principal gathering of pilgrims, known as the Syrian Caravan, sets out from Constantinople on the 12th of the month Rajab, and collects the votaries of northern Asia in its passage through Anatolia and Syria, until it reaches Damascus, where it remains for several weeks, being placed under the charge of the Pasha of the Province, who, in virtue of the duties which fall to his share, assumes the title and dignity of Amiru'l Hajj, or "Chief of the Hajj." As the early Khalifs for many years discharged personally this high and important office, and placed themselves at the head of the pilgrims, it may well be imagined that this position is at once respected and coveted ; nor is it cause for astonishment that in such circumstances nothing can equal the pomp with which the Pasha of Damascus is surrounded, when he commences to march with the pilgrims. There are generally a large number of officers and soldiers clad in coats of mail, or covered with the skins of tigers, some carrying shields and quivers decked with silver, or it may be gold, and occasionally even with precious stones : while others bear lances and pikes, either gilt or silvered, as the case





may be, and ornamented with streamers. The grantees of the country, as well as the citizens and common people of the town, accompany the caravan, bestowing pious wishes for the auspicious termination of the journey, while at every station caravanserais and public fountains have been constructed by former Sultans to accommodate it on its passage, which for some stages is attended with continual festivities and rejoicings. But at Damascus it is necessary to make arrangements for a thirty days' journey across the Desert to Madina, and the animals which carry the burdens thus far have to be changed, since the Anatolian camel is not able to bear the fatigues of such a journey. This, however, presents no difficulty, seeing that almost every town in the eastern part of Syria furnishes beasts for the purpose; these latter are, of necessity, very numerous, seeing that they have to carry not only water and provisions for the "Hajis" and soldiers, their horses, and the spare animals brought to supply such as may fail on the road, but also daily food for the camels themselves, as well as provisions which are stored in repositories on the route to provide a supply for the return journey. It has been asserted that, on one occasion, when the mother of the last of the Abbasides performed the pilgrimage, in A.H. 631 (A.D. 1233), her caravan was composed of 120,000 camels. It is also related that it took 900 camels to transport the wardrobe of Sulaiman Ibn Abdu'l Malik (A.H. 97 = A.D. 715). But far eclipsing this was the pilgrimage of a Sultan of Egypt in A.H. 719 (A.D. 1319), when 500 camels were hired to convey sweetmeats and confectionery alone, and 280 were laden with pomegranates, almonds, and other fruits, while the travelling larder could boast of 1,000 geese and 3,000 fowls! Truly might this be termed pilgrimage made easy! The splendour of the cavalcade is subsequently enhanced by the presence of the Pasha of Tripoli, and minor officials, at the head of a large body of troops for the protection of the caravan, lest it should be



molested by brigands, more especially in the deserts of Syria and Arabia. On more than one occasion, notwithstanding all these precautions, the pilgrims have been attacked and robbed, sometimes even massacred, by the Nomad tribes, through whose regions they had to pass ; but as such calamities are more sorely felt by the nation at large than even the defeat of their troops in war, the authorities are perforce compelled to take every pains to ensure, as far as possible, the safety of the pilgrims, who are thus escorted till within three stages from Madina.

At night torches are lighted, and the journey is performed between three o'clock in the afternoon and an hour or two after sunrise on the following day. The Bedouins, however, who carry the provisions for the troops, travel only by day, and in advance of the caravan, the encampment of which they pass in the morning, being in turn overtaken by the latter on the following night at their own resting-place. The journey with these tribes, though less fatiguing, as ensuring a night's rest, is seldom attempted, owing to the questionable character which the children of the desert enjoy in the East.

At every watering-place on the route there is a small castle with a large tank attached to it, at which the camels water. These buildings are inhabited by a few persons, who remain there the whole year, to protect the provisions made over to their charge. At the watering-places which belong to the Bedouins, the Shaikhs of the tribes meet the caravan and receive the accustomed tribute. Water is plentiful on the route, the station being nowhere more distant than eleven or twelve hours' march ; while in winter pools of rain-water are frequently found. Pilgrims who travel with "litters," or on commodious camel-saddles, suffer comparatively little inconvenience ; but the poorer classes who follow the caravan on foot, often die on the road from exhaustion and fatigue.

*The Egyptian caravan, which assembles near Cairo*

on 25th Shavval, and starts on the 27th of that month, is under the same regulations as the Syrian cavalcade, but is composed solely of Egyptians. The journey, which occupies thirty-seven days, is along the shore of the Red Sea, and leads through the territories of wild and warlike tribes of Bedouins, who not unfrequently attack the caravan. The watering-places also are much fewer than on the Damascus route,—three days occasionally intervening between the wells, which are, moreover, seldom copious, and often brackish. So dangerous, indeed, is this route, that on one occasion, in 1814, all the pilgrims took the route *via* Suez, leaving the Egyptian caravan composed solely of soldiers. It is sometimes accompanied by parties of public women and dancing girls, whose tents and equipage are generally amongst the most splendid in the caravan. Female “Hajis,” of a similar class, are also to be found in the Syrian caravan. Both the great cavalcades from Constantinople and Cairo return from Mecca on 23rd Zu’l Hijja, after a stay of ten days in the Holy City.

One custom, peculiar to both nations, remains to be noticed,—the procession of the “Mahmil,” or “Mahmal” as it is commonly, but erroneously, called. This term, which means “that by which anything is supported,” is universally applied in the East to the litter which accompanies the pilgrims to Mecca. Not infrequently, however, and with reason, it is used to designate the camel which bears the burden in question.

It is composed of a square skeleton frame of wood, with a pyramidal top, and has a covering of black brocade, richly worked with inscriptions and ornamental embroidery in gold, in some parts upon a ground of green or red silk, and bordered with a fringe of silk, with tassels, surmounted by silver balls. Its covering is not always made after the same pattern with regard to the decorations, being sometimes a fine silk brocade, adorned with ostrich feathers. But generally, if not invariably, on the upper part of the front, a view of the Temple of Mecca is worked in

gold, and over it the Sultan's cipher. As a rule, it contains nothing in the interior, but has two copies of the Quran attached externally at the top,—one a small scroll, and the other in the usual form of a book, also small, each enclosed in a case of gilt silver. The Egyptian Mahmil, however, in place of the two copies



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of the Quran attached to the cover, has a small book of prayer, and some charms packed within the litter. The five balls, with crescents, which ornament the Mahmil are of gilt silver. The whole is borne by a fine tall camel, which is generally indulged with exemption from every kind of labour during the re-

mainder of its life. On the line the Mahmil is stripped of its embroidered cover, the frame of wood being carried on a camel's back. Even the gilt silver balls and crescent are exchanged for similar articles in brass.

The most commonly accepted version as to the origin of the procession of the Mahmil is, that about the middle of the thirteenth century a beautiful Turkish female slave, after the death of the Ruler of Egypt, whom she had married, caused herself to be acknowledged as Queen of that kingdom, and performed the pilgrimage in a magnificent covered litter borne by a camel. After this, for several successive years, her empty litter accompanied the caravan merely for the sake of State; hence succeeding Princes of Egypt sent with each year's caravan of pilgrims a Mahmil, as an emblem of Royalty.

Burckhardt, however, believes the custom to have arisen from the circumstance that the Bedouins from time immemorial were in the habit of carrying banners in battle, a practice which gave rise to the idea of a Mahmil, which indeed they most resemble. D'Ohsen, on the other hand, is of opinion that the custom is intended to perpetuate the memory of the camel upon which the Prophet of Arabia used to travel, and on which a species of throne was erected, from which latter he was wont to dispense justice to the people. Burckhardt and Burton, however, demur to this view, and are not disposed to attach any peculiar sanctity to what they are led to think is a mere act of regal state. The point a short time since assumed considerable importance, owing to the circumstance that the British troops in Egypt were present at the ceremony, which took place at Cairo, on the occasion of the departure of the "Mahmil," and their presence evoked much criticism on the part of a considerable section of the public of this country, while, to add to the difficulties with which the case was surrounded, the procession of the "Kiswa" took place on this occasion simultaneously with that of the "Mahmil" in consequence of the dis-

turbed state of the country, which rendered impracticable its departure at the proper date.

The day of the departure of the "Mahmil" from Constantinople is a sort of religious fête. The ceremony on this occasion is very quaint and merits notice. The representative of the Sultan repairs at the head of a great cortège to the Palace to receive the orders of his monarch, as well as the "Mahmil" and treasure. The Sovereign seats himself under a great, gaily decked, pavilion in the middle of a vast corridor adjoining the portion of the palace set apart for the ladies. After this the Imams of the Imperial Mosques and other high personages are introduced and form a semicircle around His Majesty, sitting on small rugs placed upon the larger carpet, which covers the floor of the pavilion. At their head is one of the fourteen shaikhs of the Imperial Mosques, who enjoy the honour alternately every year, according to seniority. The dignitary whose turn it is to take the lead commences by chanting different songs in praise of the Prophet, the other prelates joining him from time to time, and finishes with good wishes for His Majesty's health. On the termination of this part of the ceremony the principal members of the body of black eunuchs present themselves in the midst of the Court with a camel magnificently draped, having a silver chain round its neck. An officer then advances and, placing his hand on the camel, kisses the latter respectfully. This done he leads the animal about before the Sultan, after which he consigns it to the charge of the officer destined to take it *en route* to Mecca, which latter is thereupon decorated with a vest of honour; the first mentioned officer also receives from the grand master of the ceremonies a sable fur with a gold-cloth vest. The treasure is then loaded upon eight mules, of whom five carry cases decorated with green velvet. The documents relating to the distribution of the money annually sent by the Sultan for the support of the Holy Mosque, said to amount to upwards of £70,000, are *then sealed* and placed, in the presence of the Sultan in

the hands of the leader of the cortége. After these preliminaries are finished, the Chief Chancellor of the Empire produces a letter from the Sultan to the Grand Sharif of Mecca, which, too, is handed with great state to the officer in charge of the "Mahmil." All is now completed, and the latter personage carries the Sultan's letter in a gold cloth purse, as far as the second door of the palace, accompanied the while to the precincts of the first court by a high officer of state, the compliment being paid rather to the "Mahmil" than to the man. All the prelates now follow the cavalcade, which marches thence through the streets of Constantinople, presenting a most extraordinary and imposing sight. First of all there are the numerous functionaries of dignity and importance in full uniform, both preceding and coming after the camel, which, it may be added, is followed by a second to replace the first in case of accident, as also by eight mules laden with treasure. After this sedate and serious procession there follows a body of buffoons and jesters playing antics and making fun to indicate their joy at the approaching pilgrimage. The procession is also accompanied by numerous mules carrying peculiar-looking boxes, of various shapes and sizes, decorated with banners and feathers. The mules, laden with treasure are taken in a galley to the Asiatic side of the water, but the camels are stripped of their ornaments on the quay and led back without any ceremony to the Palace, where they are carefully tended. They are not taken to Mecca, for fear they should succumb to the fatigues of so long a journey, their place being supplied at the sacred city by two others, supposed to have descended from the animal which carried the Prophet. Of these one is kept in Syria by the Pasha of Damascus, who sends it every year to Mecca; the other is sent from Egypt by one of the Beys of the province, charged with the care of the pilgrims. For the first time, probably, in the history of Muhammadanism, the cavalcade in the autumn of 1882, instead of journeying the usual caravan route, through the desert

went by special train to Suez, and thence by steamer to Jedda.

A similar procession takes place at Cairo, when the "Mahmil" passes through the Metropolis. This usually happens about the 23rd of Shavval, though the final departure of the caravan does not occur till the 27th of that month.

The Persian caravan sets out from Baghdad, but being "sectaries" (Shias), and in many cases men of property, it is apt to suffer so much molestation and imposition during the route, that great numbers of the people now come by sea, embarking at Bussora for Mocha, where, if the wind be favourable, they go to Jedda, if not they form themselves into a caravan, and come by land along the coast of Yaman. Sometimes they swell the numbers of the Syrian caravan; from which they are, however, easily distinguishable, owing to the circumstance that their camel-drivers hail from Baghdad. The Persians being heretics who conceal their doctrine during the "Hajj" were not always permitted to come to the Holy City. "In 1634," writes Burckhardt, "a few years after the temple of Mecca had been rebuilt, Sultan Murad IV. commanded that no Persian of the sect of Ali should be allowed to perform the pilgrimage or enter the Baitu'llah. This prohibition was complied with for several years, but the money expended by the Persians soon re-opened the way to Arafat, and the Kaba. We hear from Asami that in 1625 a sectary of Ali was impaled alive at Mecca because he would not "abjure his creed." Failing a pilgrimage to Mecca, where an outward manifestation of respect to the memory of the first Khalifs is rigorously enforced, the mass of the population of Persia content themselves with a visit to the sepulchres of Ali, and his sons Hasan and Husain, whose remains are deposited at Najaf and Karbala, or to the tomb of the Imam Reza at Meshed. When a Persian journeys to the Holy City he not unfrequently contrives on entering the mosque to pollute the tombs of the detested Khalifs Abu Bakr

and Omar, "an act of foolish fanaticism which has cost many an innocent life ; for on such occasions the Arabs seize their sabres, and cut down every Persian they see," in any case rarely do the Shia votaries escape without an unmerciful beating at the hands of their Sunni rivals. To avoid these dangers the Shias deem themselves entitled to put in practice a pious fraud, and pass themselves off for Sunnis, an act of hypocrisy which the latter severely condemn as unworthy of true followers of the Prophet of Arabia.

In former times there used to be a regular Maghrabi caravan, starting from Morocco and proceeding by way of Tunis and Tripoli to Alexandria and thence to Cairo, after which it followed the common pilgrim route ; but for many years this caravan has ceased to be regular, and pilgrims from Barbary usually proceed by sea to Alexandria and Jedda, in parties of from 50 to 100 at a time.

There are minor caravans, which come ordinarily when the roads are open, and the country is tranquil ; but they are from time to time discontinued, and need not be more than mentioned : these are the Yaman caravan, which either starts from Sada in Yaman, and takes its course along the mountains to Tayif and Mecca, or follows a line along the coast. From time to time also small parties of pilgrims, consisting of Indians, Persians, and Arab beggars arrive in the Hijaz by way of Muskat and Najd.

Of all the poor pilgrims who annually repair to the sacred cities of Arabia, none bear a higher name than the negroes called "Takruris" who come *via* Mas-sowa, Suakim and Cosseir. A most industrious class of men, some employ themselves as porters, labourers or water-carriers, while others make small hearths of clay, painted with yellow and red, which they sell to the pilgrims, who boil their coffee-pots upon them. Many again manufacture small baskets, and mats of date leaves, or prepare an intoxicating drink called "Buza." They generally manage during their stay in the Hijaz



to scrape together a small sum of money which enables them, on their return, to start some slight venture on their own account.

When once the pilgrims reach the confines of Arabia they are under the care of the Grand Sharif of Mecca, who is supposed to be answerable for them, a regulation which is perhaps more honoured in the breach than in the observance. This worthy, who enjoys entire religious power in the Hijaz, is appointed by the Sultan of Turkey; but the latter, in view that the dignity is nominally hereditary, generally confines his selection to members of two powerful families. On his attaining office the Grand Sharif is invested with a gold embroidered mantle edged with marten sable, which together with a diploma of creation, the Sultan sends from Constantinople. This ceremony used for many years to be repeated annually, but it is believed that the custom has fallen into disuse. This high dignitary, who is clad in white, is always distinguishable by a peculiar turban of the same colour, ornamented with large tufts, the gold threads of which hang down upon the shoulders. His only symbol of office is a large green satin umbrella, carried by an attendant. His salary, which is paid by the Sultan, is nominally £15,000 per annum, but it is open to question whether this amount ever really reaches the Grand Sharif's pocket.

The secular authority centres chiefly in the Pasha of Jedda, who, in common with the governor of Madina, bears the title of "Shaikhu'l Haram," or "Governor of the Holy Sanctuary." As might be supposed, the secular and sacred officers clash, and the two rivals "thwart each other on all possible occasions, quarrels are bitter and endless, there is no government, and the vessel of state is in danger of being water-logged in consequence of the squabbling between her two captains." Such is the testimony of Burton, founded upon personal experience on the spot.

Pilgrims of the better class generally come by land. These pass the interval before the "Hajj" pleasantly



*The Grand Sharif of Mecca.*



enough, living together in a state of freedom and equality. They keep but few, if any, servants, and divide amongst themselves the various duties of daily life. They are to be seen in scores reading the Quran, smoking in the streets or coffee-houses, praying or conversing in the mosque in full pride of being near the holy shrine, and in pleasurable anticipation of adding to their names in due course the auspicious title of "Haji."

Few of them, except mendicants, arrive without bringing some production of their respective countries for disposal, the profits on the sale of which diminish, to some extent, the heavy expenses of the journey to Mecca. The Maghrabis, for instance, bring their red bonnets and woollen cloaks; the European Turks shoes and slippers, hardware, and embroidered stuffs, sweetmeats, amber trinkets of European manufacture, knit silk purses, &c.; their kinsmen from Anatolia sell carpets, silks, and Angora shawls; the Persians deal in Kashmir shawls, and large silk handkerchiefs; the Afghans barter tooth-brushes made of the spongy boughs of a tree growing in Bokhara, beads of a yellow soap-stone, and plain, coarse shawls manufactured in their own country; the Indians display the numerous productions of their rich and extensive region; the people of Yaman provide snakes for the Persian pipes, sandals, and numerous other works in leather; while the Africans trade in various articles adapted to the wants of their nation. The wares, however are generally sold by auction, owing to the impecuniosity of the owners, who are, as a rule, compelled to accept prices much below the intrinsic value of the article itself.

A very considerable number of the pilgrims who annually visit Mecca travel by sea to Jedda, whence they betake themselves in company to the City of Cities. The condition of these poor wretches is beyond the pale of description. Sometimes as many as 600 or 700 miserable creatures are huddled together on board a single ship, without proper accommodat on, and with

few or none of the decent arrangements of life, so that the condition of the vessel, after a few days have elapsed, is filthy and disgusting beyond description. That women as well as men should elect to witness such scenes as they are compelled to experience on this journey by sea to Jedda, is an additional proof of the strong hold which the religion of Islam has taken upon the millions who glory in undergoing discomforts and dangers the bare mention of which occasions a shudder of horror on the part of any one accustomed to the proprieties and comforts of modern civilization. Nor is the return home less distressing, for, added to the discomforts attendant on the voyage, the votaries are frequently compelled to endure great suffering while waiting at the port for a vessel to take them away. Many during this period, which is often protracted, sell everything they possess in the world, and when this is not sufficient to procure food, they are turned into the streets to starve and perish.

That such a state of affairs should not have escaped attention on part of the British authorities may well be imagined ; the result may be gathered from a resolution recently published by the Government of India under date, 21 Jan. 1886.

For several years past the attention of the Government of India has from time to time been directed to the desirability of alleviating, so far as is possible, the discomforts and sufferings experienced by Muhammadan pilgrims during the journey from India to the Hijaz. The existence of these sufferings, more especially in the case of those of the poorer class of Muhammadans who undertake the pilgrimage, is an admitted fact ; but the action taken with a view to afford relief has been necessarily of a restricted nature, owing to the unwillingness felt by the Government to undertake any direct interference with what is considered to be a religious obligation by a large section of the Muhammadan community in India. In 1880 intimation was received from Her Majesty's Secretary of State that the Turkish Government *had issued orders requiring passports from all passengers and*

pilgrims arriving in Jedda, whether Turkish or foreign subjects, and announcing that those who came unprovided with such documents would be liable to be repelled from the ports of the Hijaz. In order to render these Turkish regulations as little irksome as possible to natives of India proceeding to the Hijaz on pilgrimage, the Government of India, after consulting Local Governments and Administrations, resolved to establish a system under which passports should be unconditionally given to every intending pilgrim, not only at the Indian ports of embarkation but also at the central stations of every district in British India, and at the head quarters of all Political Agencies in Native States. Arrangements were also made to grant informal passes to the subjects of other Governments, *e.g.*, natives of Kashghar, Russian Turkestan, Afghanistan, &c., who embark for Mecca from Indian ports, it being explained that these passes impose no responsibility on the Government of India in regard to the holders, and that the Governor-General in Council could not in any way guarantee their recognition by the officials of the Turkish or any other Foreign Government. Further, in consideration of the very large number of pilgrims who annually embark at, and return to, Bombay, and of the necessity of making some special arrangements to meet their requirements, a Muhammadan Protector of Pilgrims was appointed at that port and instructed to supply intending pilgrims with all the information and assistance within his power in respect of every matter connected with the pilgrimage.

2. Since the above measures were undertaken, further efforts have been made by the Government of India towards the proper regulation of the India pilgrim traffic by amending the provisions of the Native Passenger Ships Act (No. VIII. of 1876) in certain important respects, and by revising the rules issued under that Act with reference to the fitting, provisioning, sanitary arrangements, &c., of pilgrim ships. These rules have been assimilated, as far as possible, with those in force for regulating the transport of emigrants to the French and British colonies, and have been widely circulated in the form of a "Manual for the guidance of officers and others concerned in the Red Sea Pilgrim Traffic." It has been made obligatory on ships conveying more than 100 pilgrims to carry a qualified medical officer, and in order to promote the welfare of Indian pilgrims during their stay in the Hijaz, an

Indian Vice-Consul has been appointed at Jedda, whose special duty it is to attend to the interests and well-being of the pilgrims. In order further to afford protection and assistance to the pilgrims, especially in connection with their detention in quarantine under the orders of the Turkish Government, a Muhammadan Vice-Consul has been temporarily appointed for Hodeida and Camaran. A dispensary has also been established at Jedda for affording relief to Indian pilgrims in the Hijaz. Lastly, in order to regulate and bring under proper control the transactions of pilgrim-brokers in the city of Bombay, it is proposed to introduce a Bill into the local Legislative Council under which the business will in future be restricted to licensed persons ; and certain penalties will be imposed for any breach of the terms of the license. The action hitherto taken cannot fail to have effected a substantial improvement in the position of pilgrims during the voyage to Jedda and while staying in the Hijaz. In the course of the correspondence which has taken place with Her Majesty's Secretary of State on the subject, it was considered whether intending pilgrims should be required before proceeding on the voyage to deposit a sum of money sufficient to cover the cost of their return journey. The Government of India admitted that such a regulation would prevent much misery and suffering, but the opinion of the local authorities was opposed to interference of this nature on the ground that it might be misunderstood and misinterpreted, and the Governor-General in Council accordingly decided that action of the kind was unadvisable. At the same time a public notice was issued in the English, Hindustani, and Persian languages warning persons who propose to undertake the pilgrimage of the difficulties to which they would be exposed owing to the imposition by the Turkish Government of quarantine for at least ten days at the Island of Camaran (during which period pilgrims are required to pay certain fees besides arranging for their own provisions), and impressing upon intending pilgrims the desirability of not starting unless provided with sufficient funds (at least Rs. 300) in order to meet the expenses of quarantine, of the journey from Jedda to Mecca and back, and of the return journey to India.

3. In October 1884 a communication was received from Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son, expressing the readiness of *that firm* to undertake the conveyance of pilgrims between

India and Mecca. The extensive experience gained by Messrs. Cook and Son in connection with requirements of schemes of a similar character, and the considerable degree of success which has attended their operations, clearly pointed to that firm as peculiarly qualified to assist the Government in still further regulating the conveyance of pilgrims between India and Arabia, and in placing the arrangements on a footing more satisfactory to the Government and more convenient to the pilgrims themselves than has hitherto been found possible. Messrs. Cook and Son were accordingly informed that if they were able to make the necessary arrangements, the Governor-General in Council would be prepared to give them such assistance as might be within his power. Messrs. Cook and Son have now informed the Government of India of the conditions upon which they are prepared to undertake the agency and control of the conveyance of pilgrims to and from Jedda, and the Governor-General in Council, after careful consideration and personal communication with Mr. J. M. Cook, is of opinion that those conditions are such as may be accepted. The conditions contemplate the appointment of Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son to be pilgrim agents for the whole of India, local officers and officers in charge of treasuries being instructed to assist that firm in making known the terms of through conveyance to Jedda and back, and in disposing of through tickets. The Bombay Government will be requested to make over to the representatives of the firm the issue of passports in Bombay after these have been signed by the proper authorities, and to instruct the Protector of Pilgrims to work in harmony with the firm and to render it every possible assistance. On the other hand, Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son agree to arrange with the railway administrations, steam ship proprietors, and others concerned, for the conveyance of the pilgrims, at through fares, from all the chief stations in India to Jedda and back, and to do all in their power to secure the transit of the pilgrims in satisfactory ships supplied with proper accommodation in accordance with the regulations laid down by the Government. They are prepared to provide the requisite agency for the work, Muhammadans being appointed for this purpose in all cases where necessary; to establish a special pilgrimage office in the most convenient position at Bombay, and possibly also at Jedda; and to make all detailed arrange-



ments in connection with the issue of the necessary announcements, forms of tickets, &c. Lastly, the firm has expressed its readiness to comply with the requirements and regulations which may be laid down from time to time by the Government of India precisely in the same manner as though they were in the service of the Government.

4. The Governor-General in Council feels convinced that a scheme of the nature above described cannot fail, if successfully carried out, to be productive of much benefit to Indian pilgrims to the Hijaz, but if success is to be ensured, it is essential that every assistance should be afforded to Messrs. Cook and Son, not only by Local Governments and Administrations, but also by District and other officers upon whom it will devolve to give effect to the detailed arrangements. His Excellency in Council accordingly trusts that Local Governments and Administrations will see that this is done, and will direct local officers to co-operate in every possible manner with the representatives of the firm in carrying on their operations.

It is difficult to state accurately the precise number of pilgrims who annually repair to Mecca, but perhaps 40,000 to 60,000 may be taken as a fair average. Of these about one half journey by sea in the following proportions :—

|                                      |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Indians ... ..                       | 8,500  |
| Turks, Egyptians, and Syrians ... .. | 8,000  |
| Malays ... ..                        | 7,000  |
| Persians ... ..                      | 3,400  |
| Maghrabis ... ..                     | 1,700  |
| Soudanis and Yamanis... ..           | 1,300  |
|                                      | <hr/>  |
|                                      | 29,900 |

It will be seen that the Indian and Turkish "Hajis" are the most numerous, while the Malays come next in importance. The last are mostly Dutch subjects from Java, who are encouraged by their rulers to visit the holy places in Arabia, on the ground that "the experience gained on the journey as to the tyranny and extortion of the Musulman Government in the Hijaz tends to increase in a 'Haji' the sense of the advan-

tages he enjoys at home, and dissipates many of the illusions with regard to the temporal power of Muhammadanism."

Mr. Blunt, taking the year 1880 as his basis, estimates the number of pilgrims as follows :—

|  | Sea.   | Land.  |
|--|--------|--------|
| Ottoman subjects, including pilgrims from Syria and Iran, but not from Egypt or Arabia Proper ... .. | 8,500  | 1,000  |
| Egyptians ... ..   | 5,000  | 1,000  |
| Maghrabis ... ..   | 6,000  | ...    |
| Arabs from Yaman ... ..  | 3,000  | ...    |
| „ Oman and Hadramaut ... ..  | 3,000  | ...    |
| „ Najd ... ..  | ...    | 5,000  |
| „ Hijaz ... ..   | ...    | 22,000 |
| Negroes from Soudan ... ..   | 2,000  | ...    |
| „ Zanzibar ... ..  | 1,000  | ...    |
| Malabaris from Cape of Good Hope ... ..  | 150    | ...    |
| Persians ... ..  | 6,000  | 2,500  |
| British Indians ... ..   | 15,000 | ...    |
| Malays ... ..  | 12,000 | ...    |
| Chinese ... ..   | 100    | ...    |
|  | 61,750 | 31,500 |
| Total ... ..   | 93,250 |        |

A more recent return which has just reached me gives the figures for 1885 in the former column at 17,303, carried on 26 vessels ; of these pilgrims Java supplied 6,799 ; India, 6,577 ; Persia, 713 ; Arabia, 1,627 ; Bokhara, 1,161 ; Turkey, 397 ; Afghanistan, 18 ; and China, 11. It is probable that Mr. Blunt's totals much exceed the truth.

*Prohibitions.*—Having seen what are the fundamental points of the Muhammadan religion both as regards faith and practice, it may be well to refer to the prohibitions which are imposed upon the faithful followers of the Prophet.

The drinking of wine, under which name all sorts of strong and inebriating liquors are comprehended, is forbidden in the Quran in more places than one. Some, indeed, have imagined that excess therein is alone re-

prehended, and contend that moderate use is allowed by two passages in the same book: but the more received opinion is, that to drink any strong liquors, either in a lesser quantity, or in a greater, is absolutely unlawful; and though libertines indulge themselves in a contrary practice, yet the more conscientious are so strict, especially if they have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, that they hold it unlawful not only to taste wine, but to press grapes for the making of it, to buy or to sell it, or even to maintain themselves with the money arising by the sale of that liquor. The Persians, however, as well as the Turks, are very fond of wine; and if asked how it comes to pass that they venture to drink it, when it is so directly forbidden by their religion, they answer, that it is with them as with the Christians, who, their religion prohibiting drunkenness and profligacy as great sins, glory, notwithstanding, some in their debaucheries and others in drinking to excess.

It has been a question whether coffee does not come under the above-mentioned prohibition, because the fumes of it have some effect on the imagination. This drink, which was first publicly used at Aden in Arabia Felix, about the middle of the ninth century of the Hijra, and thence gradually introduced into Mecca, Madina, Egypt, Syria, and other parts of the Levant, has been the occasion of great disputes and disorders, having been sometimes publicly condemned and forbidden, and again declared lawful and allowed. At present the use of coffee is generally tolerated, if not granted, as is that of tobacco, though the more religious, especially the "Wahabis," make a scruple of taking the latter, not only because it inebriates, but also out of respect to a traditional saying of their Prophet, "That in the latter days there should be men who should bear the name of Muslims, but should not be really such; and that they should smoke a certain weed, which should be called TOBACCO." However, eastern nations are generally so addicted to both, that they say, "*A dish of coffee and a pipe of tobacco are a complete*

entertainment ;” and the Persians have a proverb that coffee without tobacco is meat without salt.

Opium and “*bhāng*” (which latter is the leaves of hemp in pills or conserve), though not mentioned in the Quran, are also, by the rigid Muhammadans, esteemed unlawful, because they intoxicate and disturb the understanding, yet these drugs are now commonly taken in the east ; but they who are addicted to them are generally looked upon as debauchees.

Several stories have been told as to the occasion on which Muhammad prohibited the drinking of wine : but the true reasons are given in the Quran, viz., because the ill qualities of that liquor surpass its powers for good, the common effects thereof being quarrels and disturbances in company, coupled with neglect in the performance of religious duties.

Gaming is prohibited by the Quran in the same passages, and for the same reasons as wine. The word which is there used, signifies a particular manner of casting lots by arrows, much practised by the pagan Arabs, and performed in the following manner:—A young camel being bought and killed, and divided into ten or twenty-eight parts, persons to the number of seven cast lots for them ; eleven arrows were then provided, without heads or feathers, seven of which were marked, the first with one notch, the second with two, and so on, and the other four had no mark at all. These arrows were put promiscuously into a bag, and then drawn by an indifferent person, who had another near him to receive them, and to see he acted fairly ; those to whom the marked arrows fell won shares in proportion to their lot, and those to whom the blanks fell were entitled to no part of the camel at all, but were obliged to pay the full price thereof. The winners, however, did not taste the flesh any more than the losers, but the whole was distributed among the poor ; and this they did out of pride and ostentation, it being reckoned a shame for a man to stand out, and not venture his *money on such an occasion*. This custom, therefore,

though it was of some use to the poor, no less than a diversion to the rich, was forbidden by Muhammad as the source of great inconveniences, by occasioning quarrels and heart-burnings, which arose from the winners insulting those who lost.

Under the name of lots, commentators agree that all other games whatsoever, which are subject to hazard or chance, are comprehended and forbidden, as dice, cards, tables, &c. And they are reckoned so ill in themselves, that the testimony of him who plays at them is, by the more rigid, judged to be of no validity in a court of justice. Chess is almost the only game which the Muslim doctors allow to be lawful (though it has been a doubt with some), because it depends wholly on skill and management, and not at all on chance: but it is only allowed under certain restrictions, viz., that it be no hindrance to the regular performance of devotions, and that no money or other thing be played for or betted; which last the Turks religiously observe, but the Persians neglect. But what is supposed chiefly to have been disliked in the game of chess was the carved pieces or men, with which the pagan Arabs played, being little figures of men, elephants, horses, and dromedaries; and these are thought, by some commentators, to be truly meant by the images prohibited in one of the passages of the Quran. That the Arabs in Muhammad the Prophet's time actually used such images for chessmen appears from what is related of Ali, who passing accidentally by some who were playing at chess, asked, "What images they were upon which they were so intent?" for they were perfectly new to him, that game having been but very lately introduced into Arabia, and not long before into Persia, whither it was first brought from India in the reign of Nushirwan (A.D. 530-578). Hence the Muhammadan doctors infer that the game was disapproved only for the sake of the images; wherefore the Turks always play with plain pieces of wood or ivory; but the Persians and Indians, who are not so scrupulous, continue to make use of the carved figures.

The Muhammadans comply with the prohibition of gaming much better than they do with regard to that of wine ; for though the common people, among the Turks more frequently, and the Persians more rarely, are addicted to play, yet the better sort are seldom guilty of such a proceeding.

Another practice of the idolatrous Arabs forbidden also in one of the above-mentioned passages, was that of divining by arrows. The arrows used by them for this purpose, which like those with which they cast lots were without heads or feathers, were kept in the temple of some idol, in whose presence they were consulted. Seven such arrows were stored in the mosque at Mecca ; but generally in divination they made use of three only, on one of which was written, "My LORD hath commanded me ;" on another, "My LORD hath forbidden me ;" and the third was blank. If the first was drawn, it was looked upon as an approbation of the enterprise in question ; if the second, a contrary conclusion was made ; but if the third happened to be drawn, it was customary to mix them and draw over again, till a decisive answer was given by one of the others. These divining arrows were generally consulted before anything of moment was undertaken ; as when a man was about to marry, or about to go a journey, or the like.

A distinction of meats was so generally used by the eastern nations, that it is no wonder that Muhammad made some regulations in that matter. The Quran, therefore, prohibits the eating of blood and swine's flesh, and whatever dies of itself, or is slain in the name or in honour of any idol, or is strangled, or killed by a blow or a fall, or by any other beast. In case of necessity, however, where a man may be in danger of starving, he is allowed by the law of Islam to eat any of the said prohibited kinds of food.

In the prohibition of usury, Muhammad followed the example of the Jews, who are strictly forbidden by their law to exercise it among one another, though they are guilty of it in their dealing with those of a different

religion : but the Prophet of the Arabs has not made any distinction in this matter.

The Musulman law also put a stop to the inhuman custom which had been long practised by the pagan Arabs, of burying their daughters alive, lest the parents should be reduced to poverty by providing for them, or else that they might avoid the displeasure and the disgrace which would follow, if they should happen to be made captives, or to become scandalous by their behaviour ; the birth of a daughter being, for these reasons, reckoned a great misfortune, and her death an equal happiness. The manner of practising this infanticide is differently related : some say that when an Arab had a daughter born, if he intended to bring her up, he sent her, clothed in a garment of wool or hair, to keep camels or sheep in the desert ; but if he designed to put her to death, he let her live till she became six years old, and then said to her mother, "Perfume her, and adorn her, that I may carry her to her mothers ;" which being done, the father led her to a well or pit dug for that purpose, and having bid her to look down into it, pushed her in headlong as he stood behind her, and then filling up the pit, levelled it with the rest of the ground ; but others say, that when a child was about to be born, they dug a pit ; to the brink the mother was brought, and if the child happened to be a daughter, they threw it into the pit, but if a son, they saved it alive.

This wicked practice is condemned by the Quran in several passages ; one of which, as some commentators judge, also alludes to another custom of the Arabians, altogether as wicked, and as common among other nations of old, viz., the sacrificing of their children to their idols ; as was frequently done, more particularly in satisfaction of a vow not infrequently made, that if they had a certain number of sons born, they would offer one of them in sacrifice.

*Civil and Criminal Law.*—The Muhammadan civil law is founded on the precepts and determinations of

the Quran. And it may be well to explain some of the more prominent usages and ordinances appertaining to this branch of the rites and institutions of Islam.

As regards polygamy, it is a vulgar mistake to suppose that the Prophet granted to his followers an unbounded plurality ; some pretending that a man may have as many wives, and others as many concubines, as he can maintain : whereas, according to the express words of the Quran, no man can have more than four, whether wives or concubines ; and if a man apprehend any inconvenience from even that number of lawful wives, it is added, as an advice (which is generally followed by the middling and inferior people), that he marry one only, or, if he cannot be contented with one, that he take up with his she-slaves, not exceeding, however, the limited number ; and this is certainly the utmost Muhammad allowed his followers : nor can the corrupt manners of his followers, many of whom, especially men of quality and fortune, indulge themselves in criminal excesses, be urged as an argument against so plain a precept ; nor yet the example of the Prophet himself, who had peculiar privileges in this and other points.

Divorce is also well known to be allowed by Muhammadan law : but it must not be overlooked that the Prophet, to prevent his followers from divorcing their wives on every light occasion, or out of an inconstant humour, ordained that, if a man divorced his wife the third time (for he might divorce her twice without being obliged to part with her, if he repented of what he had done), it should not be lawful for him to take her again until she had been first married and divorced by some second husband. And this precaution has had so good an effect that the Muhammadans are seldom known to proceed to the extremity of divorce, notwithstanding the liberty given them, it being reckoned a great disgrace so to do ; and there are but few, besides those who have little or no sense of honour, that will take a wife again on the condition enjoined. It must be



observed, that though a man is allowed to repudiate his wife even on the slightest disgust, yet the women are not allowed to separate themselves from their husbands unless it be for ill-usage, want of proper maintenance, neglect of conjugal duty, or some cause of equal import; but then she generally loses her dowry, which she does not if divorced by her husband, unless she has been guilty of immodesty or notorious disobedience.

When a woman is divorced she is obliged, by the direction of the Quran, to wait three months before she marry another; after which time she is at full liberty to dispose of herself as she pleases; should it, however, thus happen, she must wait the birth of the child, continuing in the meantime in the husband's house, and maintained at his expense, it being forbidden to turn the woman out before the expiration of the term, unless she be guilty of impropriety. Where a man divorces a woman who has been his wife only in name, she is not obliged to wait any particular time, nor is he obliged to give her more than one half of her dower. If the divorced woman have a young child, she is to suckle it till it be two years old; the father, in the meantime, maintaining her in all respects: a widow is also obliged to do the same, and to wait four months and ten days before she marry again.

Immorality on the part of either single or married women was, in the beginning of Muhammadism, very severely punished; it being ordered that such offenders should be shut up in prison till they died; but afterwards it was ordained that an adulteress should be stoned, and an unmarried woman guilty of impropriety scourged with a hundred stripes, and banished for a year. A she-slave, if convicted of adultery, suffers but half the punishment of a free woman, viz., fifty stripes, and banishment for six months; but is not to be put to death. To convict a woman of adultery, so as to make it capital, four witnesses are expressly required, and those, as the commentators say, ought to be men; and if a man falsely accuse a respectable

woman of disreputable behaviour of any kind, and is not able to support the charge by that number of witnesses, he is to receive fourscore stripes, and his testimony is to be held invalid for the future. Immorality, in either sex, is by the sentence of the Quran to be punished with a hundred stripes.

If a man accuse his wife of infidelity, and is not able to prove it by sufficient evidence, and will swear four times that it is true, and the fifth time imprecate God's vengeance on him if it be false, she is to be looked on as convicted, unless she will take the like oaths, and make the like imprecation, in testimony of her innocence ; which if she do, she is free from punishment though the marriage ought to be dissolved.

Before leaving the subject of marriages, it may be proper to take notice of some peculiar privileges in relation thereto, which, as is asserted, were granted by God to Muhammad, to the exclusion of all other Muslims. One of them was, that he might lawfully marry as many wives and have as many concubines as he pleased, without being confined to any particular number ; a privilege which, he asserted, had been granted to the prophets before him. Another was, that he might alter the turns of his wives, and favour such of them as he thought fit, without being tied to that order and equality which others are obliged to observe. A third privilege was, that no man might marry any of his wives, either such as he should divorce during his lifetime, or such as he should leave widows at his death.

The laws of the Quran concerning inheritances are principally designed to abolish certain practices of the pagan Arabs, who used to treat widows and orphan children with great injustice, frequently denying them any share in the inheritance of their fathers or their husbands, on pretence that the property ought to be distributed among those only who were able to bear arms, while widows were disposed of, even against their consent, as part of their husbands' possessions. To

prevent such injuries for the future, the Prophet ordered that women should be respected, and orphans have no wrong done them ; and in particular that the former should not be taken against their wills, as by right of inheritance, but should themselves be entitled to a distributive part, in a certain proportion, of what their parents, husbands, and near relations should leave behind them.

The general rule to be observed in the distribution of the deceased's estate is, that a male shall have twice as much as a female ; but to this principle there are some few exceptions ; a man's parents, for example, and also his brothers and sisters, where they are entitled not to the whole, but a small part of the inheritance, have equal shares with one another in the distribution thereof, without any difference on account of sex.

If a man dispose of part of his estate by will, two witnesses, at the least, are required to render the same valid ; and such witnesses ought to be of his own tribe, and of the Muslim religion, if such persons can be found. Though there be no express law to the contrary, yet it is reckoned very wrong for a man to give away any part of his substance from his family, unless it be in legacies for pious uses ; and even in that case a person ought not to bestow all he has in charity, but only a reasonable part in proportion to his substance. On the other hand, though a man make no will, and bequeath nothing for charitable uses, yet the heirs are directed, on the distribution of the estate, if the value will permit, to bestow something on the poor, especially such as are of kin to the deceased, and to the orphans.

The first law, however, laid down by Muhammad touching inheritances, was not very equitable ; for he declared that those who had fled with him from Mecca, and those who had received and assisted him at Madina should be deemed the nearest of kin, and consequently heirs to one another, preferably to, and in exclusion of, their relations by blood ; nay, though a man were a *true* believer, yet if he had not quitted his country for

the sake of religion and joined the Prophet, he was to be looked on as a stranger ; but this law did not long continue in force, being quickly abrogated.

It must be observed that among the Muhammadans, the children of their concubines or slaves are esteemed as equally legitimate with those of their legal wives ; none being accounted bastards, except such only as are born of common women, and whose fathers are unknown.

As to private contracts between man and man, the conscientious performance of them is frequently recommended in the Quran. For the preventing of disputes all contracts are directed to be made before witnesses, and in case such contracts are not immediately executed, the same ought to be reduced into writing in the presence of at least two witnesses, who ought to be Muslims and of the male sex ; but if two men cannot be conveniently had, then one man and two women may suffice. The same method is also directed to be taken for the security of debts to be paid at a future day ; and where a writer is not to be found, pledges are to be taken. Hence, if people trust one another without writing, witnesses, or pledge, the party on whom the demand is made is always acquitted if he denies the charge on oath, and swears that he owes the plaintiff nothing, unless the contrary be proved by very convincing circumstances.

Wilful murder, though forbidden by the Quran under the severest penalties to be inflicted in the next life, is yet, by the same book, allowed to be compounded for, on payment of a fine to the family of the deceased, and freeing a Muslim from captivity ; but it is in the election of the next of kin, or the avenger of blood, as he is called in the Pentateuch, either to accept of such satisfaction, or to refuse it ; for he may, if he pleases, insist on having the murderer delivered into his hands, to be put to death in such manner as he shall think fit.

If the Muhammadan laws seem light in case of murder, they may perhaps be deemed too rigorous in case of manslaughter, or the killing of a man undesignedly,

which must be redeemed by fine (unless the next of kin shall think fit to remit it out of charity), and the freeing of a captive; but if a man be not able to do this, he is to fast two months together by way of penance. The fine for a man's blood, which is set at a hundred camels, is to be distributed among the relations of the deceased, according to the laws of inheritance; but it must be observed that, though the person slain be a Muslim, yet if he be of a nation or party at enmity, or not in confederacy with those to whom the slayer belongs, he is not then bound to pay any fine at all, the redeeming a captive being, in such case, declared a sufficient penalty.

As to injuries done to men in their persons, the law of retaliation is approved by the Quran; but this law, which seems to have been allowed by Muhammad to his Arabians to prevent particular revenges, being neither strictly just nor practicable in many cases, is seldom put in execution, the punishment being generally turned into a mulct or fine, which is paid to the party injured.

Theft is ordered to be punished by cutting off the hand, as the offending part, which, at first sight, seems just enough; but on reflection it will at once occur that to sever that limb would be to deprive the culprit of the means of getting his livelihood in an honest manner.

In injuries and crimes of an inferior nature, where no particular punishment is provided by the Quran, and where a pecuniary compensation will not do, the Muhammadans have recourse to stripes or beating, the most common chastisement used in the East at this day, as well as formerly; the cudgel, which for its virtue and efficacy in keeping their people in good order and within the bounds of duty, they say came down from heaven, being the instrument wherewith the judge's sentence is generally executed.

Notwithstanding the Quran is in general regarded by the followers of Islam as the fundamental part of their *civil law*, the decisions of the *Sunna* among the Turks,

and of the Imams among those of the Persian sect, with the explications of their several doctors, being usually followed in judicial determinations, yet the secular tribunals do not think themselves bound to observe the same in all cases, but frequently give judgment against those decisions which are not consonant to equity and reason ; and therefore distinction is to be made between the written civil law, as administered in the ecclesiastical courts, and the law of nature or common law (so to speak) which takes place in the secular courts, and has the executive power on its side.

Under the head of civil laws may be comprehended the injunction of warring against infidels, which is repeated in several passages of the Quran, and declared to be of high merit in the sight of God, those who are slain fighting in defence of the faith being reckoned martyrs, and promised immediate admission into paradise. Hence this duty is greatly magnified by the Muslim divines, who call the sword the key of Heaven and Hell, and persuade their people that the least drop of blood spilt in the way of God, as it is called, is most acceptable unto him, and that the defence of the territories of the faithful for one night is more meritorious than a fast of two months : on the other hand, desertion, or refusing to serve in these holy wars, or to contribute towards carrying them on, if a man has ability, is accounted a most heinous crime.

While Muhammadism was in its infancy, its opponents when taken in battle were doomed to death, without mercy ; but this was judged too severe to be put in practice when that religion came to be sufficiently established, and past the danger of being subverted by its enemies.

When the Muhammadans declare war against people of a different faith, they give them their choice of three offers, viz., either to embrace the faith of Islam, in which case they become not only secure in their persons, families, and fortunes, but entitled to all the privileges of other Muslims ; or to submit and pay tribute, by

doing which they are allowed to profess their own religion, provided it be not gross idolatry or against the moral law ; or else to decide the quarrel by the sword, in which last case, if the followers of the Prophet prevail, the women and children which are made captives become absolute slaves, and the men taken in the battle may either be slain, unless they turn Muhammadans, or are otherwise disposed of at the pleasure of the prince.

On the first considerable success of Muhammad in war, the dispute which happened among his followers in relation to the division of the spoil rendered it necessary for him to make some regulation on this point ; he therefore pretended to have received the divine commission to distribute the plunder among his soldiers at his own discretion, reserving thereout, in the first place, one-fifth part for the uses after-mentioned ; and, in consequence, he took himself to be authorised on extraordinary occasions, to distribute it as he thought fit, without observing an equality.

The fifth part directed by the Quran to be taken out of the spoil before it be divided among the captors, is declared to belong to God, and to the apostle and his kindred, and the orphans, and the poor, and the traveller ; which words are variously understood.

Immovable possessions, as lands, &c., taken in war, are subject to the same laws as the movable ; excepting only that the fifth part of the former is not actually divided, but the income and profits thereof, or of the price if sold, are applied to public and pious uses, and distributed once a year, while the prince may either take the fifth part of the land itself, or a like portion of the income and produce of the whole, as he shall make his election.

It was a custom among the ancient Arabs to observe four months in the year as sacred, during which they held it unlawful to wage war, so that taking off the heads from their spears, they used to cease from incursions and other hostilities. During those months even they in fear of their enemies lived in full security ;

so that if a man met the murderer of his father or brother he durst not offer him any violence.

The months which the Arabs held sacred were al Muharram, Rajab, Zu'l qada, and Zu'l hijja ; the first, the seventh, the eleventh, and the twelfth in the year. The last mentioned of these being the time wherein they performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, not only that month, but also the preceding and the following, were for that reason kept inviolable, that every one might safely and without interruption pass and repass to and from the festival. Rajab is said to have been more strictly observed than any of the other three, probably because in that month the pagan Arabs used to fast ; Ramazan, which was afterwards set apart by Muhammad for that purpose, being in the time of ignorance dedicated to drinking in excess.

The observance of the aforesaid months seemed so reasonable to the Prophet that it met with his approbation ; and the duty is accordingly confirmed and enforced by several passages of the Quran, which forbid war to be waged during those months against such as acknowledge them to be sacred, but grant, at the same time, full permission to attack those who make no such distinction, in the sacred months as well as in the profane.

One practice, however, of the pagan Arabs, in relation to these sacred months, Muhammad thought proper to reform : for some of them, weary of sitting quiet for three months together, and eager to make their accustomed incursions for plunder, used, by way of expedient, whenever it suited their inclinations or convenience to put off the observing of al Muharram to the following month Safar, thereby avoiding to keep the former, which they supposed it lawful for them to profane provided they sanctified another month in lieu of it, and gave public notice thereof at the preceding pilgrimage. This transferring the observation of a sacred month to a profane month is absolutely condemned in a passage of the Quran and declared to be an impious innovation.



The setting apart of one day in the week for the more peculiar attendance on God's worship, so strictly required by the Jewish and Christian religions, appeared to Muhammad to be so proper an institution, that he did not hesitate to imitate an example of which he approved ; though, for the sake of distinction, he obliged his followers to observe a different day from either. Several reasons are given why the sixth day of the week was selected for this purpose ; but Muhammad seems to have preferred the day on which the people used to assemble together long before his time, though such gatherings were held, perhaps, rather on a civil than a religious account. However it be, Muhammadan writers bestow very extraordinary encomiums on this day, calling it the prince of days, and the most excellent day on which the sun rises, asserting also that it will be the day whereon the last judgment will be solemnized ; and they esteem it a peculiar honour to Islam, that God has been pleased to appoint this same to be the feast-day of the Muslims, and grant them the advantage of having first observed it.

Though the Muhammadans do not think themselves bound to keep their day of public worship so holy as is the case with the Jews and Christians, there being a permission, as is generally supposed, in the Quran, allowing them to return to their employments or diversions after divine service is over ; yet the more devout disapprove of any part of that day being devoted to worldly affairs, and require it to be wholly dedicated to the business of the life to come.

The portion of this chapter relating to the pilgrimage to Mecca, appeared as an article in the April number of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE SECTS OF ISLAM.

## THE SUNNIS.

IT is a belief common to the whole Muslim world that Muhammad, as regards all that he said or did, was supernaturally guided from on high ; hence it follows that his words and actions constitute a divine rule of faith and practice ; this is the doctrine which underlies the fabric of the Sunni creed with its 145,000,000, of votaries, the name itself being derived from the Arabic word "Sunna" meaning regulation. In the early days of Islam the Prophet's sayings were not, it is true, committed to writing, but handed down by word of mouth, while the record of his actions existed not save in the memories of his faithful followers. In such circumstances, it may readily be conceived that the first four Khalifs, who had all of them been friends and companions of the Lawgiver of Arabia, and as such the repertories of his utterances, attained an influence but little inferior to that of the founder of Islam himself, and their authority is a dominant principle amongst the millions who profess the Sunni creed. To these "leaders of thought" also must be added the name of Ayisha, the favourite wife of the Prophet ; nor must the six companions of Muhammad, known as the "Evangelists of Islam," be omitted from the honoured list. It cannot be doubted that zealous efforts were made to hand down the traditions of the faith pure and undefiled, and indeed the Prophet Himself denounced in terrible language, the wickedness of those who purposely misrepresented his words. Yet in spite of all this care, spurious traditions imper-

ceptibly crept in, and, so early as the second century of Islam, the evil had risen to such a height, that the most foolish and extravagant notions began to mar and disfigure the simplicity of the belief in one God, and men were taught to suppose that they would be consigned to everlasting perdition for the commission of the most trivial offence, such as, to quote one instance, wearing their trousers below the ankle. This being the case, an attempt was made by some pious enthusiasts to eradicate, as far as possible, the dicta which were unreliable. The result was the well-known "Sihah Sitta" or six correct books, compiled by six learned "Muhadisin," or "collectors of traditions."

The first of these, termed Sahih Bukhari is named after Abu Abdu'llah Muhammad Ibn Ismail, a native of Bukhara, who was born A.H. 194 (A.D. 809). He was a man of middle height, spare in frame, and, as a boy, totally blind. The grief of his father, was, on this account, intense. But one day in a dream, he saw the patriarch Abraham, who said to him, "God, on account of thy grief and sorrow hath granted sight to thy son." Vision being thus restored to the lad, he was sent, at the age of ten, to school, where he began to learn the traditions by heart. When his education was finished, a famous doctor chancing to come to Bukhara, was mortified at receiving a correction at the hands of the young student; the audacity was astounding, but the stripling was, none the less, more than a match for his elder companion, who had in fact to acknowledge his error. Encouraged by his success the youthful Bukhari set to work collecting and sifting the traditions, and it is said that at the early age of sixteen he was able to remember upwards of 15,000 of them. In the course of time he got together no less than 600,000, of which after careful examination he selected and approved of 7,275, and recorded them in the well-known volume "Sahih i-Bukhari. It is said that he never sat down to examine a tradition without invoking the aid of the Almighty to prevent the occurrence of error. His memory was

incredible. When, for instance, at Baghdad, the doctors and priests of that city determined on one occasion to put his knowledge to a severe test ; they accordingly selected one hundred traditions, and falsifying them, distributed them in tens to as many different persons, with directions that they should attend one of Al Bukhari's assemblies, and question him regarding the said traditions. This was done, and in the midst of a large assemblage the pious doctor was called upon to pronounce his judgment. He listened in silence as one by one the questioners read their traditions, which had purposely been altered from the original text ; in every instance the ejaculation was unchanged, "I am not acquainted with it." When all had finished, he repeated in succession the whole hundred traditions, as they originally stood. From that day his influence was unbounded, and a crowd of little short of 90,000 persons are said to have attended his lectures and studied under him. For sixteen years he lived in a mosque, and died, much respected, at the age of sixty-four.

The mass of traditions brought together by Al Bukhari is known as the "Authentic collection," and regarded as the highest in point of authority of the six works which are accepted by Muhammadan orthodoxy. But defects of method in the arrangement of his book rendered it so bewildering and full of perplexity as regarded purposes of consultation, that a fresh compilation on an improved and simpler plan was made by his friend and fellow pupil, Muslim Ibn Hajjaj, a native of Khorassan, who, with indefatigable industry, collected together upwards of 300,000 traditions ; eliminating from these such as rested on no sound basis, he formed the remainder into a volume, thenceforward known as "*Sahih-i-Muslim*," *i.e.*, "the emendations of Muslim."

This learned doctor is said to have been a very just man, and never to have turned away those who came to him for advice. His death, if the account which has been handed down be worthy of credit, was singular. One day he was sitting as usual in the mosque, when

some people came to ask him about a tradition. As he could not discover it in the books in his possession at the time, he repaired to his house to make search. Whereupon, as it was clear that the matter was a work involving much research and trouble, the people brought him a basket of dates. The learned doctor, unable to control his appetite, went on eating and searching till he died. This strange termination of the holy man's career occurred in A.H. 261 (A.D. 874).

The third compilation, known as "Sunan-i-Abu Daud," was, as its name implies, the work of Abu Daud Sajistani, a native of Saistan. A great traveller, he visited all the principal places of Musulman learning, labouring all the time most diligently at his studies, till in the end he attained an unrivalled knowledge of the traditions, of which he collected about 500,000, and transferred 4,800 to his book; his devotion and piety also gave him that authority which in all ages has attached to a pure and blameless life. He flourished from A.H. 202 (A.D. 811) till A.H. 275 (A.D. 888).

The fourth book or "Jami-i-Tirmizi," was the work of Abu Isa Muhammad Tirmizi, a learned theologian born at Tirmiz in the year A.H. 209 (A.D. 824). But little is known of him beyond that he was a disciple of Bukhari, and a well-informed man whose exactness was proverbial.

The fifth collection of traditions, celebrated to fame as the "Sunan-i-Nasai," was compiled by Abu Abdu'r Rahman Nasai, born at Nasa in Khorassan in the year A.H. 214 (A.D. 829). It is recorded by those who sing his praises, that this doctor was wont to fast every other day, and that he had four wives and many slaves. He met his death, which occurred in A.H. 303, (A.D. 915), at the hands of the people of Damascus, who, enraged at a pamphlet which he read to them in the mosque dilating upon the virtues of Ali, and vexed at his refusal to sing the praises of Muawiya (the deadly enemy of the latter Imam) beat the unhappy saint so severely that he died in a few days from the injuries

he had received at the hands of the incensed Damascenes.

The sixth and last treatise "Sunan-i-Ibn-Maja," contains 4,000 traditions collected by one Ibn Maja, of whom all that is known is that he was born at Iraq in the year A.H. 209 (A.D. 824), and that he ranked as a high authority regarding the traditions, being well versed in all the sciences connected with them.

The Sunnis are subdivided into four chief sects, which, notwithstanding some differences as to legal conclusions in their interpretation of the Quran, and matters of practice, are generally acknowledged to be orthodox in radicals, or matters of faith, and capable of salvation, and have each of them their several stations or oratories in the temple of Mecca.

Theoretically, it is true any Muslim can attain to the exalted degree of a leader in the faith, but it is one of the principles of Muhammadan jurisprudence that such a high honour is dependent on the five following conditions. (1.) A knowledge of the Quran and all that is related thereto, including a complete familiarity with Arabic literature in all its branches. (2.) A knowledge of the Quran by heart. (3.) A knowledge of the traditions, or, at least, of 3,000 of them, the more important being learned by heart. (4.) A pious and austere life. (5.) A profound knowledge of all the sciences of the law.

The first of the four orthodox sects, is that of the Hanifites, so called after their founder Abu Hanifa, born at Kufa in the 80th year of the Hijra (A.D. 699). It is said that one night, having dreamed that he was digging open the tomb of the prophet, next morning he sent to an interpreter of visions to inquire the meaning of what had happened. The reply disclosed to him, though in somewhat ambiguous terms, the purpose of his life. "The person who had this dream will lay open a science never before discovered."

Devoting himself to the study of the Quran, the eloquence of his tongue, coupled with the sweetness of

his voice, gave an irresistible charm to his utterances ; while his plain solid understanding, combined with his modesty and piety, gained for him high rank and influence amongst the expounders of the sacred volume.

He achieved, too, an immense fame by reason of his knowledge of the law, and the subtlety and acuteness he displayed in applying the method of analogical deduction. But he shrank from putting his legal knowledge to any practical use, and, indeed, when appointed Qazi at Kufa, at that time a great centre of religious fervour, he refused to act. The Amir was greatly incensed at this opposition, and ordered the recalcitrant theologian to be daily flogged in public till he should consent. So day after day ten strokes of the whip were inflicted on Abu Hanifa till the number mounted up to 110, when, finding the fortitude of the Imam still unvanquished, an order was given that the hapless doctor might be set at liberty.

To his many mental qualifications Abu Hanifa added a quickness of retort, which on several occasions served him in good stead. The story runs, that when the Abbasides came into power, the Amir summoned to his presence the man of God : on entering the room a chamberlain, who bore the latter great enmity, advancing before his sovereign, said, " O Commander of the Faithful ! this Abu Hanifa maintains an opinion contrary to that which was held by your ancestors, who said that when a man takes an oath, and one or two days after puts restrictions to it, these latter are valid. Now Abu Hanifa teaches that restrictions are not valid unless announced simultaneously with the oath." On hearing this charge Abu Hanifa said, " O Commander of the Faithful ! your chamberlain has asserted that the oath of fidelity towards you which was taken by your troops may not be binding." " How so ? " inquired the Khalif. " Because," answered the ready-witted theologian, " when they went back to their dwellings they might have made such restrictions as rendered their oath null." The Amir laughed, and

advised his chamberlain to avoid in the future making attacks which ended in defeat. When they had retired, the defeated champion accused his victor of an intent to shed blood. "No," replied Abu Hanifa, "but you meant to bring about the shedding of mine, and I saved not only myself but you."

The discomfiture of one courtier did not prevent another of his companions from a similar attempt. The circumstances were as follows:—One day seeing Abu Hanifa enter the Khalif's presence chamber, where there was a numerous assembly, an opponent muttering to himself, "I shall have his life taken this very day," turned towards him and exclaimed, "Tell me, Abu Hanifa, if a man be ordered by the Commander of the Faithful to behead another man, without knowing anything about his conduct, is it lawful for him to obey?" "Tell me," rejoined the Imam, "does the Commander of the Faithful order what is right, or what is wrong?" "He orders what is right," was the only reply which was possible in the presence of the Khalif. "Then," said Abu Hanifa, "let right be done and no questions asked." "That man thought to have cast me into bonds, but I shackled him," was the triumphant exclamation of a genius whose ready wit had for a second time saved him from destruction.

But Abu Hanifa was destined to succumb at last to the tyranny of his sovereign. In the year of the Hijra 150 (A.D. 767), when the building of Baghdad had been completed, that nothing might be wanting to add to the glory of the new capital of Islam, the Commander of the Faithful determined to appoint the great jurisconsult of Iraq as Qazi over the city. The Imam pleaded unfitness as a reason for declining the office, "You lie!" was the brusque and somewhat discourteous exclamation of the incensed Khalif; "you are fitted for it." Abu Hanifa mildly represented—"You have now decided in my favour, and against yourself. Is it lawful for you to nominate a liar as a Qazi over those whom God has confided to your care?" The retort was



striking, but it failed in effect, and the aged Imam was sent to prison, where after a lapse of six days he died: not, however, before, so tradition would have it believed, he had repeated the Quran 7,000 times.

His tenets are praised from their being founded more on reason than on tradition. He himself says of himself, "We select first from the Quran, then from the traditions, then from the decrees of the Companions. We act upon what the Companions agreed upon: where they doubt we doubt." His teaching, which was chiefly oral, was founded exclusively on the Quran, and claimed to be logically developed therefrom by the method of analogical deduction. The Hanifite School of theology has been aptly described as the "High and dry party of Church and State." His enemies impute to him ignorance and presumption, quoting in support of the former charge his own confession that he was unable to decide whether a hermaphrodite could be admitted into Paradise, or a "jinn" become perceptible to the human vision; while to substantiate the latter accusation they maintain that, among other deviations from the true faith, he departed from the text of the Quran in allowing his followers to drink wine after its spirit had been somewhat evaporated by boiling. They also urge that he altered a number of practices concerning prayer and purification, which are inculcated in the sacred volume. These accusations, doubtless, owe their origin to the circumstance that in one of his works Abu Hanifa propounded his views to the effect that the faithful, so long as they remain in the true religion, do not become enemies of God, even should they repeatedly fall into sin; which latter, according to his conception, does not arise from want of faith—in short, he taught that grace is not incompatible with wickedness.

In connection with this point the story runs that on one occasion, when Abu Hanifa was performing his devotions in the Mosque at Kufa, a band of men surrounded the temple, and, advancing towards the theologian,

demanded of him at the peril of his life an answer to two questions. "There are at the entrance," said they, "two corpses; one of a man, who, after drinking to excess, has died; the other of a woman who has died in childbirth with an adulterous offspring, she herself not having repented. Are the persons in question amongst the unbelievers or the faithful?" "Are they Jews?" demanded Abu Hanifa. "No," was the response. "Christians?" "No." "Magi?" "No." "Idolaters?" "No." "What religion then did they profess?" "They were Musulmans," replied the questioners. "In that case," said Abu Hanifa, "you have your answer." "How?" exclaimed the astonished inquirers. "Because," said the astute man of God, "how can you place those who have accepted Islam amongst the ranks of the disbelievers?"

When questioned on a point of doctrine Abu Hanifa always gave a satisfactory reply, in so far that nothing embarrassed him; of this an instance occurred when he was summoned by the Khalif, who wished to know how many free women a free man might legally take to wife. "Four," replied the jurist. "Your hear, noble lady?" said the Khalif to his spouse. "Amir of the Faithful," interrupted Abu Hanifa, "it is permitted to you to have but one." "How so?" said the enraged and astonished Khalif; "you have just named four." "True," replied the unabashed theologian, "God has said 'Marry amongst the women who please you, two, three, or four, but if you fear being unjust towards them espouse but one.' When you pronounced the words 'You hear, noble lady,' I perceived that you were in a condition of mind which rendered the last portion of God's decree applicable to your case." When Abu Hanifa went forth, the wife of the Khalif sent him a present as a mark of her appreciation; but the gift was returned, with an intimation that it was not for her, but for God, that the words had been spoken.

There is a tradition that this doctor having received a slap, said to the person who had the audacity to

strike the man of God, "I could return you injury for injury, but I will not do so ; I could, too, bear a complaint against you before the Khalif, but I will not do so ; I could at any rate in my prayers represent to God the outrage which you have done to me, but I will not do so. Lastly, on the day of judgment, I could demand vengeance at the hands of the Almighty ; but far from doing so, if that terrible period were to arrive at this very moment, and I had the opportunity of interceding for you, I would not enter Paradise save in your company." Noble sentiments were these for a man who, living in the second century of Islam, had given utterance to precepts which would have done credit to the teachings of Christianity in the year of grace One thousand eight hundred and eighty-six. Abu Hanifa was by trade a silk-mercator ; one day a poor woman came to him, and begged that she might have some goods at cost price. "Take them," said he ; but the sum named was so low that the woman fancied he was mocking her, till he pointed out that he had made his profit on another piece of silk of the same description, and was therefore to some extent indifferent as to his charges on this occasion.

It is well known that the Quran requires that a Muslim who apostatizes shall be put to death ; in the case, however, of a woman, Imam Hanifa ruled that she should be imprisoned and beaten every day. The passage runs "Him who changes his religion kill." But it chances that the Arabic word translated "him who" is of common gender ; in these circumstances the other Sunni leaders of thought hold that the injunction refers to persons of both sexes.

Perhaps, however, notwithstanding all that has been said, the best idea of the man may be derived from the advice which he gave to the governor of a province as to the mode of rule which the latter should pursue :—

"Live amicably with thy brethren ; testify to them thy regard, visit them, honour wise men, respect old persons, be





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kind to young men, show indulgence for people's faults, cultivate the society of the virtuous, avoid the wicked, never reveal a secret, show regard for people of noble sentiment, speak little, only discuss with distinguished personages, return good for evil, salute every one, even the lowest, avoid chicanery, and observe perpetually in thy words the laws of sincerity, attach thyself under all circumstances to religion. He to whom God shall give grace to practise these precepts will see strangers draw near to him, his enemies change to friends, while his discourse and words will serve as a lesson for other men, his science and life will profit the whole world. He will be universally loved, respected, praised and lauded."

The sect of Abu Hanifa for a lengthened period flourished for the most part in Iraq, but are now to be found chiefly amongst the Turks and Tartars.

The second orthodox sect is that of Ibn Malik, who was born at Madina, in the year of the Hijra 90, 93, 94, or 95, (A.D. 708, 711, 712 or 713), the precise date being unknown, and died there in A.H. 177, 178, or 179 (A.D. 793, 794 or 795). This doctor is said to have paid great regard to the traditions of Muhammad. In his last illness a friend going to visit him found him in tears, and asking him the reason of it, he answered, "How should I not weep? and who has more reason than I? Would to God that for every question decided by me according to my own opinion, I had received so many stripes, then would my accounts be easier. Would to God I had never given any decision of my own!"

Being once asked his opinion as to forty-eight questions, his answer to thirty-two of them was, that he did not know; this reply is highly applauded by his followers, who deem it no easy matter that one who had any other view than God's glory should make so frank a confession of his ignorance.

At another time he refused to answer a question which had been asked, with the view of showing his ignorance:—"Tell the people that sent you," thus did Malik enjoin the messenger, "that Malik has answered

that he could not answer." He never, if he could avoid so doing, pronounced a tradition when travelling, or standing, or when pressed for time. "I like to feel the meaning of the Prophet's words when I repeat them to others," was his excuse on such occasions ; not only so, indeed, but he used to go through a regular fixed ceremony prior to the utterance of a sacred saying. He first made an ablution, after which he seated himself in the middle of his mattress, and spreading out his beard, he assumed a grave and dignified deportment. "I delight in testifying my profound respect for the sayings of the Apostle of God," was his explanation, "and I never repeat a tradition unless I feel myself in a state of perfect purity." In accordance with the same spirit of veneration, he never made use of a horse in Madina, even when much enfeebled and advanced in years. "I shall never ride in the city wherein the corpse of God's Apostle lies interred."

During Ibn Malik's sojourn at Madina that city became the centre of an Aliide insurrection ; the learned doctor took no part in the movement, but was understood to favour the claims of the descendants of the Prophet's son-in-law ; on which ground, when peace was restored, he was summoned before the governor of the Hijaz, who was so highly incensed that he had the venerable theologian stripped and flogged, after which he caused the arm of the teacher of religion to be drawn out to such a degree that it became dislocated at the shoulder.

His system of jurisprudence—the "Low Church" school of Islam—is founded on the customs of Madina, which he arranged and systematized ; after this he embodied them with the traditions current in that city, and compiled a code embracing the whole sphere of life. He held that the doctors of the town in question would have been sure to have followed the practice and usage of their predecessors, when called upon to decide what might be done, and what should be avoided ; while these latter, in turn, might well be supposed to

have borrowed their ideas from Muslims who had been ocular witnesses of the actions of the Prophet ; it was on these grounds that he made the traditions of Madina the basis of his school of theology. His treatise is known as the "Muwatta," or "beaten path," the greater part of its contents being legal maxims, and opinions delivered by the Companions of Muhammad. It is worthy of note, that this is the first book of this nature which was committed to paper, all the traditions having hitherto been preserved orally from generation to generation.

It is related of Ibn Malik that on one occasion the Khalif Harunu'r Rashid sent a messenger to the theologian, bidding him come to the palace, and bring his book with him ; but he refused, saying, "A man of wisdom is visited, but does not visit—science must be sought, but will not seek." The Ruler of the Faithful insisted on his attendance ; having no alternative, the theologian presented himself before his sovereign, who inquired as to the cause of his guest's disobedience. "Ruler of the Faithful," replied Malik, "the Prophet always honoured science ; be not thou the first to abase it, for God will humble thy power." Harun felt the force of the remark, and, rising from his seat, walked with Malik to the doctor's house, where, sitting on the stairs, he made ready to listen to the words of the "Muwatta" ;—but its author refused to read, saying, "If one removes science from the people to benefit the aristocracy, God will not make the nobles of the land to prosper." So an assistant took the place of the master. When the Khalif had listened for some time, Malik said to him, "Commander of the Faithful, thou hast come to see the wise men of our land, know that they admire modesty." The Amir was so pleased with the boldness and zeal, and, truth to tell, possibly with the flattery of Ibn Malik, that he resolved to introduce the "Muwatta" as a guide and direction for the subjects under his sway.

In spite of the modesty and wisdom of this doctor,



he is accused by his enemies of having taught that the flesh of all animals, except swine and beings endowed with reason, may be eaten ; and they also allege that he affirmed the legality of a practice which cannot be named, but which all other Muhammadan teachers have deemed infamous.

The doctrine of Malik, for a while predominant in Spain, is now chiefly followed in Barbary, and other parts of Northern Africa.

The author of the third orthodox sect was Ash Shafii, born either at Gaza or Askalon, in Palestine, in the year of the Hijra 150 (A.D. 767), the same day that Abu Hanifa died ; but he was carried to Mecca at two years of age, and there educated. After a while he repaired to Madina, where he pursued his studies under the direction of Ibn Malik, who was so pleased with the diligence and zeal displayed by the student, that he addressed to the latter these encouraging words: "Have confidence in God, thou wilt soon become renowned ; God hath placed in thy heart a flame, quench it not with sin." A few years before his death, which occurred A.H. 204 (A.D. 819), he went to Egypt, where his fame was so great that on one occasion no less than 900 carriages were drawn up outside his door, the occupants being engaged in listening to the words of wisdom which fell from the learned theologian's mouth. This doctor is celebrated for his excellency in all parts of learning, and was much esteemed by Ibn Hambal his contemporary, who used to say that "he was as the sun to the world, and as health to the body." The latter, however, had at first so ill an opinion of Ash Shafii that he forbade his scholars to go near him ; but some time after, one of them meeting his master trudging on foot after the excommunicated doctor, who rode on a mule, asked Ibn Hambal how it came about that he forbade them to follow a person and yet did it himself ? to which the man of God replied, "Hold thy peace ; if thou but attend his mule thou wilt profit thereby."

Ash Shafii is said to have been the first who dis-

coursed of jurisprudence, and reduced that science into a method ; one wittily saying, that the relators of the traditions of Muhammad were asleep till this theologian came and waked them.

Having carefully studied the systems of the two preceding Imams, he introduced an eclectic system of his own, though based, in a large measure upon the doctrines of Ibn Malik. His "broad church" teaching was a reaction in fact against the tenets of Abu Hanifa, who propounded that, in the absence of a clear and direct statement, it will suffice if one passage in the Quran, or one tradition be adduced ; whereas in such circumstances the Shafite will require a considerable number of traditions to support his case. Though he introduced several alterations of religious forms, he advanced but few doctrines that can be deemed innovations ; indeed, the injustice of his antagonists may be judged from their accusations, the principal of which is that he departed from that text of the Quran which prohibits gambling, and allowed his disciples to indulge in the pastime of chess, to an extent not exceeding three games at a sitting.

Of a most amiable nature, pious, and generous almost to a fault, he inspired his followers with a large measure of respectful awe—but the extraordinary influence which he exercised, never filled his head with pride or arrogance, and it is related of him that he always carried a stick to remind him that he was but a traveller in this world. He used to divide the night into three parts, one for study, another for prayer, and a third for sleep ; that he was diligent in the use of his time is testified by the circumstance that he left no less than 113 treatises on various matters connected with the religion and doctrine of Islam. It is related of him that he never so much as once swore by God, either to confirm a truth, or to affirm a falsehood ; and that being by chance asked his opinion, he remained silent for some time, and when the reason of his silence was demanded, he answered, "I am considering first whether it be

better to speak or to hold my tongue." The following saying is also recorded of him, viz. : "Whoever pretends to love the world and its Creator at the same time is a liar."

The chief seat of Ash Shafii's system was originally Egypt, where he had passed so great a portion of his life, and where his tomb was considered a sacred spot by the Faithful, and much visited by devout pilgrims. But schools to disseminate his doctrines were founded in Iraq, Khorassan, and the regions beyond the Oxus, and shared with the Hanifite seminaries the privilege of teaching and giving opinions on questions of law. The rivalry, however, thus engendered, soon degenerated into a deep and bitter hatred, and it is recorded that when the Mongols in after years besieged the city of Rhe, one faction, the Shafites, entered into secret negotiations with the invaders to deliver up the town, upon condition that the Hanifites should be exterminated. The agreement was carried out to the letter, but the spectacle of so many Shafites remaining untouched while the carcases of their brethren lay in festering piles in the streets, was intolerable to a horde of barbarians, whose sole ambition was indiscriminate slaughter, so the fiat went forth that no distinction of religion was to stay the avenging sword ; thus the traitors to their country and their faith met the just reward of their bigoted perfidy and pious malignity. The stronghold of Shafism in the present day is at Cairo, though in India, especially at Haidarabad, and in the Bombay Presidency, the mass of the Musulman population adopt the tenets of this form of Islam.

Ibn Hambal, the founder of the fourth sect, was born in the year of the Hijra 164 (A.D. 780) but as to the place of his birth there are two traditions. Some say that he first saw day at Marv, in Khorassan, where his parents were settled, and that his mother brought him thence to Baghdad at the breast ; while others are of opinion that she reached that city before giving birth to her child. Ibn Hambal in process of time attained a



*Shayi and Hambal.*



great reputation on account of his virtue and knowledge, being so well versed in the traditions of Muhammad that it is said he could repeat no less than a million of them! He was very intimate with Ash Shafii, from whom he received most of his traditionary knowledge, having been his constant attendant till the departure of the latter for Egypt. Refusing to acknowledge the Quran to be created, that is, to be the language of man, he was, by order of the Khalif of the day, severely scourged and imprisoned. Ibn Hambal died at Baghdad in the year 241 of the Hijra era (A.D. 855), and it is alleged, was followed to his grave by 800,000 men, and 60,000 women. It is related as something very extraordinary, if not miraculous, that on the day of his death no less than 20,000 Christians, Jews, and Magians embraced the Muhammadan faith.

Ibn Hambal appears to have been bolder than any of his predecessors, and to have taught doctrines which subjected him to the most cruel persecutions. Nor need this latter circumstance occasion wonder, seeing that he lived at a time when orthodox Islam seemed in danger of being lost amidst the rationalistic speculations and licentious practices of the Court at Baghdad: so rejecting the dangerous principles of analogical deductions, which had so weakened all the essentials of Faith, he went upon the surer ground of the Traditions, as these at least could not be supposed to pander to the appetites of a people steeped in luxury and self-indulgence. But to curb the passions of men, and to restrain their freedom of thought and action, is at all times difficult, and Ibn Hambal in encountering opposition, shared the fate of all reformers who seek to bring back mankind to ways of purity and faith.

So scrupulous was this theologian in his veneration for the Prophet of Arabia, that he would not eat water-melons because, although aware that the Master whom he adored, indulged in them, it was uncertain whether the founder of Islam peeled off the rind, or whether he broke, bit, or cut them! In these circumstances

the disciple deemed it better to refrain than to sin. Again, it is alleged that this Imam forbade a woman, who questioned him as to the propriety of the act, to spin by the light of such torches as might happen to pass along the streets in night, because the Prophet had not mentioned that it was lawful so to do. But if tradition be accepted in his case, virtue was its own reward, for the tale is told that one day, when sitting in an assembly, he alone of all present observed some formal custom authorised by the Prophet, whereupon Gabriel at once appeared and informed him that on account of this action he had been selected as Imam!

At one time the Hambalite sect increased so fast, and became so powerful, that in the year A.H. 323 (A.D. 934), they raised a great commotion at Baghdad, entering people's houses and upsetting their wine wherever it was found: they beat, too, the singing women, and broke their instruments. But at the present day, Ibn Hambal's followers are not very numerous, and few of them are to be found beyond the limits of Arabia.

Such are the four leading schools of thought in the Sunni faith; it must not, however, be supposed that the divergence of opinion in Islam ends here: far otherwise; the parties in the Muhammadan Church are well-nigh unlimited. Every reformer who can collect a few followers, establishes a new canon of faith, and the pages of history teem with the recital of the struggles, the upheavings, the heresies which have rent asunder the belief in the one God, as established by the Prophet of Arabia.

Of the numerous sects which from time to time sprang into being, some had a temporary and transient existence, while others took root and brought forth fruit. Of this latter category few examples are more conspicuous than the Wahhabis founded by Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, who was born at Najd, in Central Arabia in A.H. 1103 (A.D. 1692). After going through a course of Arabic literature, he studied jurisprudence,

under a teacher of the Hanifa school, and then set out in company with his father, to perform the Hajj. After this he went to Madina, where he received further instruction in law, and then repaired to Ispahan to spend some time in the society of the learned men who resided at that city. On his return to his native town he assumed the position of a religious teacher, but was shocked to find how the people had departed from the simplicity of their faith. Luxury in the form of rich dresses and silken garments, superstition in the use of omens, auguries and the like, pilgrimages to shrines and tombs, seemed to be altering the character of the religion as given by the Prophet of Arabia, while the great doctrine of the Unity of God was obscured by the veneration paid to saints and holy men. So his soul was roused within him, and he determined to purify the religion which had grown so corrupt, and to start a school of his own. Girding his loins for the great enterprise which he had taken in hand, he set forth on his mission, proclaiming to the people these stirring words:—

“The Muslim pilgrim adores the tomb of the Prophet, and the sepulchre of Ali, and of other saints who have died in the odour of sanctity. They run there to pay the tribute of their fervent prayers. By this means they think that they can satisfy their spiritual and temporal needs. From what do they seek this benefit? From walls made of mud and stones? From corpses deposited in tombs? If you speak to them, they will reply, ‘We do not call these monuments God, we turn to them in prayer, and we pray the saints to intercede for us on high.’ Now the true way of salvation is to prostrate oneself before Him who is ever present, and to venerate Him,—the One without associate or equal.”

With such and similar language, he aroused against him the passions of the multitude, who sought to rid themselves of a man thus preaching against their indulgences and follies; but Ibn Abdu'l Wahhab found a protector in the person of a local chief, named Mu-



hammad Ibn Said, and the latter threw in his lot with the young reformer. Assisted with the soldiers which his patron brought to his aid, matters soon assumed a more hopeful aspect, and the new religion was inculcated at the point of the sword. The bigotry of the youthful creed was stern and uncompromising. "As soon as you seize a place, put the males to the sword ;" such was the language of the new leader of the Faithful. "Plunder and pillage at your pleasure, but spare the women, and do not strike a blow at their modesty." On the day of battle each soldier was presented with a paper, entitling the bearer to a safe conduct to the world of bliss ! The letter in question, which was addressed to the Treasurer of Paradise, was enclosed in a bag, and suspended by the warriors to their necks. The soldiers were thus persuaded that the souls of those who died in battle would go straight to Heaven, without being examined by the two questioning angels in the grave. The widows and orphans of all who fell were supported by the survivors : as, therefore, the warriors who shed their blood on behalf of the new religion, went direct to Paradise if slain, while if they survived a share of the booty was the reward for the dangers and toils which they had undergone, the zeal of the enthusiastic propagandists knew no bounds. In the course of time, the daughter of Muhammad Ibn Said married the pious warrior whom her father had befriended ; thence arose this Wahhabi dynasty, which continues to this day.

In 1803 both Mecca and Madina fell into the hands of the Wahhabis, who stripped the mosques of their decorations, and consigned to the flames the rosaries, the silken robes, the pipes, and all else which was repugnant to the tenets of the reformers of Islam : after holding possession of the sacred cities, however, for nine years they were expelled by the Turks, and their ruler publicly executed in the Square of St. Sophia at Constantinople ; since that period the political power of the Wahhabis has been confined

chiefly to a small portion of Arabia, which still acknowledges their sway. They are to be found, however, scattered throughout India in more or less considerable numbers, and constitute a focus for intrigue in some of the more fanatical towns; but they are not knit together in one compact commonwealth, acknowledging a supreme head and ruler, and are, as a consequence, powerless for good, even assuming that their tenets are calculated to effect the reforms which the founder of the creed proclaimed as his object and desire.

The Wahhabis acknowledge as the foundation of their faith—first, the Quran: secondly, the Traditions recorded on the authority of the Companions, so far that is as concerns those things in regard to which the latter were unanimous in opinion and practice. But the Unity of God is the one supreme dogma which underlies the whole of their belief, and it is because they set their faces against many of the practices tending to obscure this doctrine that they come into collision with other Musulmans. Thus they hold it to be unlawful to call upon any saint, or to invoke his aid in time of need, instead of worshipping God, or to use any other name than that of the Almighty in attacking an enemy; nor will they allow passages to be read with the view of propitiating ought but Him, making others the object of contemplation. While admitting that on the Day of Judgment Muhammad will receive permission from God to intercede for his followers, they deny that he has that power at present. Again, prostration, bowing down, standing with folded arms, spending money in the name of an individual, fasting out of respect to his memory, proceeding to a distant shrine in a pilgrim's garb, and calling out the name of the saint whilst so going, are one and all deemed blamable, while it is thought wrong to cover the grave with a sheet, to say prayers at a shrine, to kiss any particular stone, to rub the mouth and heart against the walls of any sacred edifice, &c. It is further considered

folly to keep up superstitious customs, such as seeking guidance from beasts, trusting to omens, believing in lucky and unlucky days, and the like thereof. Lastly, it is forbidden to swear by the name of the Prophet or others, which is to give them the honour due to God alone.

Another common belief which the Wahhabis oppose is that Musulmans can perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, say prayers, read the Quran, abide in meditation, give alms, and do other good works, the reward of which shall be credited to a person already dead.

In matters of practice they deem all innovations as objectionable, classing in this category the fine arts in all their branches, while to wear silk garments, "to drink the shameful," or in other words to smoke tobacco, is a deadly sin, which nothing can expiate, not even the mercy of God! The number of the Wahhabis is estimated by Mr. Blunt at 8,000,000, but it is far from improbable that these figures are unduly high.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE SHIAS.

THE second great division of the Muslim faith is known as the "Shia" creed, which, supplanting the religion founded by Zoroaster, who is generally supposed to have



ZOROASTER.

flourished from B.C. 521 to B.C. 485, became the national doctrine of the Persian Monarchy. The main tenets of the faith thus banished from Iran's shores are a belief in the All-Good, whose habitation is the Kingdom of Light, and in an evil Being, who dwells in a region of darkness. The names of these two powers are respectively Ormazd and Ahriman, and the true believer is instructed so to conduct himself that he may be eternally happy hereafter with the Prince of Light, instead of inhabiting the Kingdom of the Ruler of Darkness. Fire-light, and the sun are revered, if not worshipped as symbols of the Divine nature, hence the term "fire-

worshippers" by which this sect are not infrequently designated. Prayer is also a duty most strongly enjoined, it being the prerogative of the priest to intercede alike for himself, and the whole of his brethren.

At death the materials of the body are supposed by the Zoroastrians to rejoin their respective elements, earth to earth, water to water, fire to fire, and the life to the viewless air. For three days after dissolution the soul is supposed to flit round its tenement of clay in hopes of a reunion. On the fourth an angel appears who conducts it to a structure connecting heaven and earth, whereon sits the angel of Justice to weigh the actions of mortals : according to his decision the heavenly dog either permits the departed spirit to cross and join the souls of its ancestors in heaven, or precipitates it into the gulf of torment, which yawns below. When the good deeds prevail, the soul is met on the bridge in question by a dazzling figure which says : "I am thy good angel : I was pure originally, but thy good deeds have rendered me purer ;" thereupon passing its hand over the neck of the blessed soul, it leads the latter to Paradise. If on the other hand iniquities preponderate, the doomed spirit is met by a hideous spectre, which howls out, "I am thy evil angel : impure myself, thy sins have rendered me more foul. Through thee shall we become miserable until the resurrection ;" on which it drags the sinning spirit to hell, where Ahri-man is waiting to taunt it with its folly and crimes. The judgment and resurrection of mankind occupy, according to the tenets of this faith, a space of fifty-seven years ; at the expiration of which the elements, which have received in deposit the various substances of the body, must render up their trust, the soul will recognize its earthly companion and re-enter it, while life will be restored to man, who then becomes immortal. Then takes place the final separation of the good and the evil. Sinners who have not in the intermediate state expiated their faults, are again sent to Hades : but not for eternal punishment. The tortures of three

awful days and nights, equal to an agony of 3,000 years, suffice for the purification of the most wicked. The voice of the Lost ascending to heaven, finding mercy in the soul of Ormazd, he will withdraw them from the place of torment. The world will melt with fervent heat, and the liquid and glossy metals will purify the universe, and fit all beings for everlasting felicity. To the just this ordeal is destined to prove pleasant and agreeable, while the wicked on the other hand are doomed to suffer excruciating agonies, after which they will be freed from their troubles. The abode of misery itself and all its demons will be cleansed, Ahriman, no longer irreclaimable, will be converted to goodness, and become a ministering spirit to the Most High God.

The whole fabric of this belief is based upon the three virtues of purity of speech, purity of action, and purity of thought. Truth is deemed the basis of all excellence, while virtue alone is happiness in this world, and its path the way of peace. Good actions are considered most acceptable sacrifices to God : industry is deemed a guard to innocence and a bar to temptation. Hospitality, philanthropy and benevolence are strongly inculcated, while untruth is paraded as the worst of sins, wickedness as the garment of shame, and idleness as the parent of want.

King Darius (B.C. 518-485) adopted the Zoroastrian religion with great ardour, and caused 12,000 cowhides to be tanned, upon which he had the doctrines of the new faith written. This collection, which bore the name of "Zandavesta," was then deposited in a rock hewn chamber at Persepolis, and to keep alive the faith, a priest was ordered to read the volume to the people, and expound its precepts. The followers of Zoroaster profess to suppose that the soul of the founder of their religion was created by God, and placed upon the tree from which all that is celestial has been produced. They would also have it believed that Zoroaster was permitted to visit the realms of bliss, on which occasion the good spirit gave him the "Zandavesta" for the direction

of mankind ; commanding him at the same time not "to soil the earth with carcasses ;" for this reason it is enjoined that the corpses of the dead shall be placed on the top of towers, in such a manner, that when the flesh has been eaten by birds, the bones will fall into the interior of the building. The priests of this religion were called "Magi," and hence the votaries are sometimes, even to this day, styled "Magians." During the rule of the Parthian kings of Persia the Zoroastrians were held in little respect ; but in A.D. 226, on the commencement of the Sassanian dynasty, the Magian faith became firmly established as the national religion of the country, a state of things which continued till the time of the Saracens, when after the battle of Qadisiya (A.H. 15—A.D. 636) the Muhammadans ruthlessly, but effectually, stamped out the Zoroastrian creed, leaving isolated individuals to follow the belief of their ancestors, but at the risk, or rather the certainty, of having to endure persecutions and suffer hardships, if not cruelties of every description ; the flame of discord then created, continues to the present day, with scarce abated violence, and the Sunnis exclude fire-worshippers from the list of the "people of the book," which honour is confined to Jesus, Christians and Muslims ; in this respect other sects amongst the Muhammadans are more liberal-minded, in that they include the Zoroastrians in the privileged category of those who will inherit Eternal Salvation.

The Shias, who are computed by Mr. Blunt to amount to 15,000,000 souls, derive their name from a word which signifies a "party" or "sect," though some are of opinion that the term takes its origin from an Arabic root indicating "disgraceful ;" the epithet having in the first instance been given as a mark of reproach. These sectaries maintain that Ali was the earliest convert to Islam, and consequently the eldest in the faith ; while his nearness of kin to Muhammad, of whom he was the cousin, and his marriage with Fatima, the Prophet's only daughter, gave him, they consider, an

indefeasible right to succeed to the Khalifat ; added to which, the same temporal and spiritual powers which they conceive should have descended to him on the death of the Lawgiver of Arabia, ought, in their opinion, to have been transmitted to his lineal descendants, and not to have formed the subject of election or choice, depending on the will of the populace, or the caprice of the people ; hence they reject as usurpers the three first Khalifs, Abu Bakr, Omar, and Othman, and consider Ali and his eleven descendants to be the true successors of the Prophet. To such an extent indeed do the Shias carry their veneration for the twelve Imams, that it is an article of their faith that no one can be saved who does not admit that, after Muhammad, the most excellent of men was Ali, then Hasan, &c., and that the former of these two is endowed with the power of creation in the same manner as if he were the Almighty himself ! Strange as it may seem, this doctrine is most implicitly carried into practice, for not only do the Shias assign to the Hierarchy in question the attributes of the Divine Being, deeming it blasphemy to utter a word against the holy men of which it is composed, but they exalt Ali to a pitch of glory, little, if any, less, than that assigned to the Prophet of Arabia ; the beloved " Hand of God " is not only their idol but their Deity ; " Muhammad is a city of learning, Ali is the gate thereof," is a comparison which accurately gauges the comparative merits of these two pillars of faith. The traditions regarding the husband of Fatima are, as might be expected in such circumstances, innumerable, all tending to glorify the hero of the Shia doctrines. Thus it is said that he never died, but was taken up alive into heaven, whence he will return in the fulness of time to fill the earth with his tenets ; to some he will appear in the shape of an angel, to others in the likeness of Satan, according as the individual's actions in this world may have been good or evil. Again, as it is undeniable, so run the traditions, that there never has been a human creature more perfect than Ali, so it



may be believed God has revealed Himself to mankind in the shape of his faithful servant, through whose agency He conducts the affairs of the world, which the latter had called into existence. Such a belief naturally involves the supposition that Ali existed before the creation of the world, so that by degrees the Shia sectaries have exalted their beloved Imam to the dignity of a God, and clothed him with the attributes of divinity.

It is even said that when Muhammad made his well-known ascension to Heaven he was surprised, and truth to tell, somewhat mortified, to find that the name of his son-in-law seemed more familiar to the denizens of the abode of bliss than that of the Prophet of Arabia. So it has happened that amongst the Shias the pen of the writer fails to describe the glory of such a hero, and the brush of the painter dares not attempt to delineate the features of a being so sacred, upon whom man, indeed, is not worthy so much as to cast a glance, and the unfinished headless trunk which is left on the canvas betokens at once the transcendent excellency of the first Imam, and the zeal of the followers who rely upon him for intercession at that great day when,

The dead shall live, the living die,  
And music shall untune the sky.

There is a tradition amongst the Muslims, that long before the creation of the world God took a ray of light from the splendour of his own glory, and united it to the body of Muhammad, proclaiming at the same time, "Thou art the elect, the chosen; I will make the members of thy family the guides to salvation." The body of the Prophet was then in some mysterious way hidden. In due time the world was created, but not until the birth of Muhammad did this ray of glory appear. This light descended to Ali, and from him passed to the true Imams, who alone can be considered the lawful successors of the Prophet—hence these sacred beings are free from original sin, their bodies being so pure and delicate that they cast no shadow.

they are, indeed, the beginning and the end of all things ; their commands and prohibitions, their very actions, the Almighty recognizes as His own. As mediums between God and man, they hold a far higher position than the prophets, for the Grace of God, without the intervention of the holy successors of the Prophet of Islam, reaches to no created beings. The Imam is the superior Pontiff, the Vicar of God on earth ; the possessor of an infallible book is not sufficient, the infallible guide is needed. The wisdom and discernment which this latter would require, could only be found—thus it is contended—amongst the descendants of the Prophet. Moreover, in the early days of the faith the possession of the Imamatus conveyed the right of conducting the public services in the Mosque, a sacred privilege, which, belonging in the first instance to the Prophet, was by him bequeathed to his successors. In these circumstances it will not occasion surprise that a belief that Ali received this important office direct from the hands of the Prophet of Arabia underlies the whole fabric of the Shia faith, and as a consequence it seems natural that the sober simplicity of the narrative which proclaims how this came to pass should be adorned with a halo of miraculousness and spirituality. The tradition narrates, that on the last occasion when Muhammad appeared in the Mosque at Mecca, the Angel Gabriel appeared to him with a message from the Almighty, bidding him publicly to proclaim his son-in-law as his successor on the first occasion when the latter should meet him. After delivering the message the Angel hastened to Ali, who happened at the time to be at Madina, and enjoined him to repair to Mecca, there to receive the sacred office at the hands of his father-in-law. It chanced that the pair met at a caravan station, midway between the two sacred cities ; whereupon, at once falling round each other's neck they kissed one another, the embrace being so close, that by a supernatural union they were but one being. Next day the Prophet erected a throne, and taking Ali

by the hand placed him thereon, holding him on his bosom such a length of time that for several minutes the two once again became but one soul, identical in feeling and aspiration ; during this period of ecstasy the virtues and powers of the founder of Islam passed, so Persian theologians would have it believed, into the possession of the "Hand of God." Lest, however, any should entertain feelings of doubt, a voice which none could gainsay, proclaimed to the assembled multitudes, "Behold your King, the Sovereign of the whole earth, my Vicar, the Lieutenant of God, the true Pontiff and Imam whom He has chosen to succeed me ; I make over to him all my power, and constitute him my general Heir and my Testamentary Executor." It might have been supposed that in these circumstances every knee would bow in allegiance to the Lord's anointed ; but it was not so, for when Muhammad lay sick in his house, having bade Ali repair to the Mosque to perform the prayers, Abu Bakr himself took possession of the pulpit, and refused to make way for the son-in-law of the Prophet ; a circumstance which so excited and vexed the Messenger of God, that if we would believe the traditions which are handed down, he took his daughter's husband by the hand, and rising from a bed of sickness, tottered to the sacred edifice, and then and there placed his son-in-law in possession of the public functions which made him a Sovereign in things temporal no less than a guide in affairs spiritual.

The earliest reference to the Shias in the history of Muhammadanism occurs in the instance of the Kharijites, the nonconformists of Islam, as they have been termed, who arising in the earliest days of the Muslim religion, enjoy the unenviable notoriety of having killed Othman because he was supposed to have departed from the traditions of the Companions of the Prophet ; nor does the record of their misdeeds end there, for to them attaches also the stigma that they originated the first dispute about the Imamat, on the occasion when 12,000 of their number revolted from Ali after the

battle of Saffain (A.H. 37—A.D. 657), and compelled him to submit to arbitration the dispute between himself and Muawiya. Some years afterwards, however, they were nearly all destroyed by the victorious Lion of God. Of the survivors, however, two fled to Oman, in the Persian Gulf, and there preached the doctrine that the Imam was elective not hereditary, and that in the event of misconduct the Imam might be deposed. Abdu'llah-ibn-Ibadh (A.H. 127—A.D. 744) was a vigorous preacher of the doctrine, and from him the sect known as the "Ibadhiya" takes its rise. The doctrines of this people differ from those of the orthodox Muslims on three cardinal points. (1.) The Imam, respecting which not only do they hold the opinion that it is elective, but they do not confine the choice to any particular class or people, and even deny that there is any absolute necessity for an Imam at all. (2.) Predestination and free-will: on these points they maintain that God is alike the author of evil as of good, man being altogether helpless as to what happens. (3.) Human actions: in this matter it is held by them that a good intention is not necessary to render an act meritorious; that a man may deny the sect to which he belongs without incurring the guilt of infidelity, but that the commission of one of the greater sins places him beyond the pale of salvation. They are computed by Mr. Blunt to amount to about 7,000,000 souls.

After the death of Ali, his descendants made several attempts to gain for themselves temporal as well as spiritual power, but save in a few isolated instances, they were not successful. Indeed, for a lengthened period the whole race was publicly cursed and excommunicated in all the Mosques of the kingdom, and even deprived of the possessions which Muhammad had given to his daughter Fatima as a dowry on her marriage.

But as is generally the case, persecution did not quench the reverence of the people for the family, and from the earliest days of Islam there have been votaries who, disagreeing in various points of belief and prac-

tice, all unite in rendering homage to the son-in-law of the Prophet of Arabia. Thus, shortly after the dismal events on the fatal field of Karbala, there arose the Kaissanites, who took their origin from Kaissan, a freed slave of Ali. These votaries held that their founder derived his knowledge from the Sayyids Hasan and Husain, the sons of his former master ; hence they attached an exaggerated importance to his universal science and learning, more particularly as regarded the hidden meaning of obscure parts of the Quran. Another peculiarity which characterized this sect, was the belief in the union of the Creator with a created being, and in the return to life after death.

Contemporary with this last-mentioned sect, were the Zaidites or partisans of Zaid, son of the Imam Zainu'l Abidin, and great-grandson of Ali, who maintained that the Imamat appertained exclusively to the family of the children of Fatima, provided they be wise, pious, courageous and generous. They allowed of two Imams should they appear in different countries, and held that obedience to such is obligatory, provided they possess the requisite qualifications. They further taught that the Imamat of one who has been chosen is valid, even though there should exist a more worthy candidate for the sacred office, and instanced the case of Ali, who was set aside in favour of Abu Bakr. Holding these doctrines, it will not occasion surprise that the more zealous Shias refused to acquiesce in such teaching, it being one of the fundamental points of their religion that the first three Khalifs were usurpers. In the year A.H. 122 (A.D. 739), Zaid took up arms against the reigning Khalif, but his troops were vanquished, and he himself, having been pierced in the face with an arrow, expired on the field of battle : his head was thereupon placed on a gibbet and exposed to the insults of the populace for a period of five years. His son Yahia continued his father's mission, and on his death the religion which had thus been taught became an established institution, and has continued up to the

present day. The sect flourishes chiefly, if not entirely, in Yaman, and numbers, according to Mr. Blunt, about 2,000,000 souls: their chief importance arises from their geographical proximity to Mecca.

The Ghair-i-Mahdi ("literally without Mahdi") are a small sect who believe that the Mahdi will not reappear. They maintain that one Saiyyid Muhammad of Jaipur, was the twelfth Imam, and that he has gone never more to return. They venerate this latter personage as highly as they do the Prophet, and consider all other Musulmans to be unbelievers. On the night called "Lailatu'l Qadr," in the month of Ramazan, they meet together and repeat two prayers, after which they say, "God is Almighty, Muhammad is our Prophet, the Quran and Mahdi are just and true. Imam Mahdi is come and gone. Whosoever disbelieves this is an infidel." A small branch of this community is settled at Mysore, where they are known as the Dairi.

Mahmud, the founder of the sect to which he gave his name, lived in the reign of Taimur (A.D. 1369 to 1405); he professed to be the Mahdi, and used to call himself the Shakhs-i-Wahid, *i.e.*, the Individual One. In the Quran there is a verse which runs thus:—"It may be that thy Lord will raise thee up to a glorious (Mahmud) station." From this he argued that the body of man had been advancing in purity since the creation, and that on its reaching to a certain degree the Mahmud would arise, and that then the dispensation of Muhammad would come to an end. He claimed to be this Mahmud. He also held the doctrine of transmigration, and taught that the beginning of everything was the "Nuqta-i-khak," an atom of earth, on which account his followers are sometimes called the "Nuqta-wiya" sect: they are also known by the names of "Mahmudiya" and "Wahidiya." Shah Abbas, King of Persia, expelled them from his dominions about the end of the 16th century, but Akbar (A.D. 1556-1605), received the fugitives kindly, and promoted some of their number to high offices of State.

A mere allusion will suffice for the smaller sects of minor importance known as (1.) The Imamites, who attach the utmost importance to the succession of Ali on the death of the Prophet; (2.) The Ismailians, founded in A.H. 148 (A.D. 765), by one Ismail, who hold that every revealed book must have an allegorical interpretation; (3.) The Gholaites, who deify the Imams; (4.) The Idrisites, who take their name from Idris, a descendant of the Founder of Islam. This sect possessed sovereign power for the space of about one hundred years, in the regions of Tangiers, Bombay, &c.; but in the year A.H. 296 (A.D. 908), they were exterminated by the Fatimites, sometimes known as the Aliides, a dynasty established at that time by one Abu Muhammad Obaidu'llah, who, claiming to be a Prophet, overran some provinces in Africa, expelled the Idrisites from Bombay, and finally conquered Egypt, where he established himself as Khalif: he then took the title of "Mahdi," though, as has been previously stated, that term is strictly speaking applied only to the twelfth and last Imam, who will not appear till the end of the world. The dynasty thus founded existed 272 years, and contained a succession of fourteen princes, all of whom added to their names the distinctive title of Ladinu'llah (to the faith of God), which is the distinctive mark of this sect.

Their extinction was attended with a peculiar circumstance which merits recital. Adhad the last Khalif, shortly before his deposal saw in a dream that a scorpion came forth from the mosque and stung him. The vision was explained as indicating that a man from the sacred edifice in question would deprive him of his dignity. Whereupon the Khalif, summoning to his presence the person in charge, inquired of him who dwelt there. The latter replied that the sole occupant was an aged person, who made great profession of his zeal and piety. The Khalif directed that this votary should be brought before him; but no sooner had the man appeared than the latter at once avowed that

he had come to the sacred edifice for the express purpose of deposing the Khalif of the Fatimites. Adhad, seeing the fellow to be a poor miserable wretch deemed him incapable of such an enterprise. So giving the intruder some money, the ruler of the Faithful dismissed him with a request that he would pray to God on behalf of the man he would dethrone. It happened that some time afterwards Saladin, wishing to render himself master of Egypt formed the resolution of suppressing the Aliide Khalifat. With this object he summoned the principal chiefs and doctors of the law to decide upon the propriety or otherwise of carrying his project into execution. The old man of the mosque hearing of this, appeared before the assembly, and spoke so strongly as to the vices and errors of the dynasty in question, that the Synod proclaimed them infidels and abolished their Khalifat.

Amongst the Shias there are a numerous class known as "Sufis," a name the origin of which has never been authoritatively settled, some are of opinion that it is derived from an Arabic word signifying pure ; others incline to the view that the "Suf," or coarse woollen cloak in which lazy ascetics were clothed, gave the name to these devotees. While a third party have conjectured that the term is derived from the Greek word "sophos," signifying wise.

The doctrines of Sufiism are briefly these. The Almighty God is diffused throughout creation, while the essence of his divinity, emanating from him continually, as rays from the sun, vivifies all nature ; which done it is reabsorbed. The souls of men are imbued with this essence, and therefore on an equality with the Lord of Heaven. In these circumstances it is the duty of mankind to be constantly engaged in searching after truth, and admiring the perfection of the Deity. An ardent but mystical love of the Creator, which frequently breaks forth in the most extravagant manner, and towards the most extraordinary objects, in which they fancy the divine image to be reflected, is the basis



of their creed, and reunion with this their ultimate object; they yearn to have the corporeal veil removed, when the emancipated soul will mix again with the glorious essence from which it has been separated, but not divided. To attain this desirable consummation the aspirant must pass through four stages. First, "humanity," which requires perfect obedience to all the observances of the established religion, as a useful discipline to prepare for advancing to the second stage; this latter is termed "the path," in the course to which the votary gains strength to acquire more exalted eminence and is admitted within the pale of Sufism. The disciple may now abandon practical for spiritual worship; but at this point he has also reached a more laborious and thorny part of his journey, which can only be safely trodden by those who are distinguished for their piety, virtue, and fortitude. Led by a suitable teacher, the young Sufi in due time attains the third stage, when he is held to be inspired and equal to the angels. The fourth implies his perfect union with the Deity. It is calculated that there are between 200,000 and 300,000 professed members of this creed in Persia; but probably this falls far short of the number of those who are secretly inclined to infidelity, in this or some cognate shape.

"Owing to their strongly centralized form of government," writes Sir George Birdwood; "the empire of the Sassanides succumbed at once before the onslaught of the Saracens; still Persia was never really converted to Islam, and when Muhammad, the son of Ali, the son of Abdu'llah, the son of Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, proclaimed the Imamatus as inherent of divine right in the descendants of the Khalif Ali, the vanquished Persians rose as one man against their Arab conquerors. The sons of Abbas had all espoused the cause of their cousin Ali against Muawiya, and when Yazid succeeded to the Khalifat Abdu'llah refused to acknowledge him and retired to Mecca. It was he who tried to dissuade Husain from going to Kufa. His son was Ali, who, by order of the Khalif Walid, was flogged and paraded through the

streets of Damascus, mounted on a camel with his face to its tail; and it was to avenge this insult on his father that Muhammad resolved to overthrow the dynasty of the Ommyyades.

"The Persians, in their hatred of the Arabs, had from the first accepted the rights of the sons of Ali and Fatima to the Imamatus; and Muhammad cunningly represented to them that the Imamatus had been transmitted to him by Abu Hashim, the son of Muhammad, another son of the Khalif Ali, whose mother was a daughter of the tribe of Hanifa. This was a gross fraud on the descendants of Fatima, but the Persians cared not, so long as they threw off the Arab yoke. When Muhammad died, A.H. 124 (A.D. 742), they at once acknowledged his son Ibrahim as Imam, and on the latter being taken prisoner by the Khalif Marwan, he transmitted the Imamatus to his brother Abdu'llah, who overthrew his Ommyyade antagonist in the battle of Zab, and was proclaimed Khalif at Kufa, A.H. 132 (A.D. 749). Thus fell the last eastern Khalif of the house of Ommyya, on the ruins of which was established the dynasty of the house of Abbas, which reigned at Baghdad until A.D. 1258.

"The Persians were oppressed by the Abbasides as intolerably as they had been by the Ommyyades, but as the vigour of the Khalifat began to abate they again rose in rebellion. In 808 Ya'qub, the son of a brazier (saffar), of Sistan, subdued Kabul, Balk, and Fars, and threatened Baghdad itself. His brother, who succeeded him, was overthrown by Ismail Saman, the founder of the Samanid dynasty of Khorassan and Bukhara. At the same time the Dailami or Buyid dynasty, so called after Abu'l Buya, a fisherman of Dailam, on the Caspian, established themselves in Fars and Iraq. In the contentions which began to distract and undermine the Khalifat at Baghdad during the tenth century the Sunnis all ranged themselves under the Turks, while the Shias adopted the cause of the Buies. It was Asadu'd Daula (reigned A.D. 977-982), the grandson of the fisherman of Dailam, who restored the sacred buildings at Karbala. The native Safawi dynasty of Persia which succeeded to the Mongol dynasties, derived its descent direct from the Khalif Ali through Ismail Safi, the son of Sultan Haidar, the founder of the Haidari sect of Shias."

This last mentioned monarch, who ascended the throne in A.H. 904 (A.D. 1499) introduced the Shia faith as the national religion of Persia, and for two centuries and a half the priests of that sect exerted an overwhelming influence in directing the destinies of the nation ; but in A. H. 1149 (A.D 1736), when the victorious general Nadir Shah, consequent on the splendid successes which had attended his arms, was asked to accept the throne of Persia, he told the assembled multitude that if he took the crown they must give up the Shia for the Sunni faith. This they agreed to do, though it soon became evident that the measure was so unpopular throughout the country that it would never be possible to carry it into effect. But Nadir Shah was inexorable, and issued an edict stating with reference to the Shia custom of adding to the Muhammadan formula, "There is but one God, and Muhammad is His Prophet," the words, "Ali is the friend of God,"—"This is repugnant to religion, and contrary to the agreement and covenant entered into. Besides, it is evident to the world that, as the prince of the faithful, the Lion of God, the victorious, is elect, praised and acceptable to the Lord of Glory, his rank and interest at the event of unity will not be increased by vulgar testimony, nor the full moon of his power be diminished by omitting these words. The ill-consequence of this form is, that both sects who equally acknowledge the chief and prophet of both worlds, will by this difference be provoked to animosities, which are disagreeable both to the Prophet, and to the Prince of the Faithful." Holding these views, he not unnaturally took every opportunity of insulting the Shia priesthood, and depriving them of their income. Indeed, immediately after he had been crowned, he assembled a number of the principal priests and demanded of them in what manner the immense reserves were appropriated. They replied "In supporting priests, colleges, and mosques. In the latter we continually offer up prayers to God for the success for our Sovereign." "Your prayers," said Nadir, "are evi-

dently not acceptable to the Almighty, for the empire suffered its greatest decline when your order was most encouraged. It has been rescued from destruction by my brave soldiers, who are, therefore, to be deemed God's chosen instruments, and your wealth must henceforward be applied to their support."

On the death of this mighty warrior in A.D. 1747, the country was so rent asunder with factions, consequent on the many aspirants for the throne, that religion for a while filled but a secondary place in the history of the Empire; but towards the close of the eighteenth century Agha Muhammad, the founder of the present dynasty in Persia, pledged himself to the advancement of the Shia faith, by wearing a sword consecrated at the tomb of the monarch who established that belief in Iraq; and at the present day the worship of Ali and his descendants is the fixed national creed of the Persian Empire.

"Though the personal history of Ali and his sons was the exciting cause of the Shia schism, its predisposing cause lies far deeper, in the impassable ethnological gulf which separates the Aryan and Semitic races."

Thus writes Sir George Birdwood; the remark exhibits a deep insight into human nature as regards the races of the East, and will probably commend itself to every reflecting reader; none the less, pride was a powerful factor in the antagonism which has always existed between the Arab and the Persian; the case is ably and succinctly argued by Osborn in his "Islam under the Khalifs of Baghdad."

"In the Quran," so writes that intellectual and thoughtful author, "it is repeatedly laid down that all believers are to regard each other as brethren, and that there are to be no distinctions of rank among them. This the Arabs could not bring themselves to concede. They were, in their own eyes, the most glorious and magnificent beings to be found on the surface of the earth, and in comparison with them all other nations were as the dust beneath their feet. The advanced state of civilization attained by Persia and Byzantium, as

compared with their own ignorance and barbarism, in no way diminished this exalted estimate of themselves. They had a theory which accounted for it. Their forefathers, so they affirmed, endowed by God with sublime aspirations, and sedulous to preserve themselves untainted from shame of every description, had seriously weighed the question as to where and how they should live. After mature deliberation, they had arrived at the conviction that the sedentary life of men in cities was adverse to the nobility of human nature. Only in the freedom and pure air of the desert could that nature be brought to its highest perfection. They had, therefore, chosen the latter, and the matchless excellences of the Arab testified to the wisdom of their choice. In virtue of the elevating power of this desert life the Arabs surpassed all other nations in the vigour of their character, the power of their thoughts, and the strength and beauty of their bodies. They were the 'travellers of the night, the lions of the battle, the genii of the desert, and the hosts of the solitudes.' It was a further proof of this manifest superiority that God had selected from among them the greatest and last of all his Prophets, that the Arabic language was spoken in Heaven, and that the temple at Mecca had been declared to be a centre of worship and holiness for all the nations of the universe.

"The Persians, in whom the pride of ancestry and the sense of their personal excellence was hardly less extreme than in the Arabs, bitterly resented this assumption of superiority. They invented a genealogy for themselves, for the express purpose of confounding the arrogance of their conquerors. They asserted themselves to be descended from Isaac the son of Abraham. They taunted the Arabs as the children of a mere concubine, whereas they were the true and legitimate representatives of Abraham and Sarah. They denied that Ishmael, the father of the Arabs, had ever been thought worthy of being offered up as a sacrifice to God, as the Arabs supposed. It was Isaac to whom this privilege had been accorded. Isaac, and not Ishmael, had built the Kaba, and the former monarchs of Persia had made yearly pilgrimages to the Hijaz long ere the Quraish had become guardians of the Holy Places. This rivalry between the two races was the main cause of the incessant insurrections which shook to pieces the power of

the Ommiyades. Every pretender to power could make appeal to it with the certainty of a hearty response. The Persians recruited the ranks of the Separatists, impelled thereto by the levelling character of their creed, and the merciless war they levelled against the Khalifs and their officials. They flocked over more readily to the banner of the Aliides, for here they were taught that the Arabs were a people peculiarly hateful in the eyes of God, on account of the barbarous murder of the son of the Khalif Ali on the plain of Karbala. But hatred of the Arab was the predominant motive which guided their actions, and any cause was good which held out a hope of retaliation on the victors of Qadisiya."

The fundamental texts of the Shia sects are five in number: (1) a belief in the unity of God; (2) an admission that He is just; (3) a belief in the Divine Mission of all the Prophets, Muhammad being the chief; (4) an avowal that Ali was Khalif next in order after Muhammad; (5) a belief that Ali's descendants, from Hasan to Mahdi, the twelfth Imam, were his true successors, and as such raised far above all other Muslims as regards character, position, and dignity. In addition to this, the Shias claim the right of free judgment in regard to the dicta of individual doctors on matters of religion, while there is a general tendency amongst them to superstitious beliefs unwarranted by the Quran, or by the written testimony of the Prophet's companions.

As the Shias reject the three first Khalifs as usurpers, it follows that this belief is hostile to the whole fabric of the Sunni school of thought, which rests on the authority of the immediate successors of the Prophet, whose very names are held in abhorrence by the former sect as being guilty of disobedience in rejecting the superior right of Ali to succeed to the Imamatus.

More particularly the Khalif Omar has been singled out as a mark of the deepest aversion; and even to this day, when a Persian discharges his bow, not uncommonly a muttered execration may be heard, "may this arrow go to the heart of Omar." Lest, indeed, this spirit of hatred should gradually die away, a custom

has been established of celebrating annually the death of the execrated Khalif. On this occasion a large platform is erected on which is fixed an image, disfigured and deformed as much as possible. Addressing themselves to this effigy, the assembled multitude begin to revile it for supplanting Ali, the lawful successor of Muhammad; at length, having exhausted all their expressions of abuse, they suddenly attack the image with stones and sticks, until they shatter it in pieces, when the inside being hollow and full of sweetmeats, the latter tumble out, and are greedily devoured by the mob attendant at a ceremony which pleases their minds and gratifies their palates.

The Shias admit to some extent the legality of the "Sunna," except where its source is contaminated, but their leading principle is an obedience to the relations and descendants of Muhammad, whom they deem to have partaken in a lesser degree of the Prophet's sacred nature; and the title by which this sect love to be distinguished is that of the "friends of the family." By a strange anomaly, however, though, as just explained, they reject the "Sunna" as unworthy of that implicit faith which is placed therein by the Sunnis, yet they have substituted five works of their own, oblivious apparently of the circumstance that the same arguments which would undermine the value of the one set of books as a guide in matters of faith, would preclude the possibility of attaching weight to any other productions which are merely the "work of men's hands."

It may well be supposed that as the Shias discard the traditions on which the Sunni school of theology is based, so in like manner they refuse to pay homage to the four great exponents thereof, the leaders of thought who are received as the Imams of the Faith. These learned doctors, they affirm, have propagated many erroneous and impious opinions, both in matters of faith and practice; and it is contended that the worldly policy which has led to the monstrous compound of

their contradictory tenets into one faith, must involve all who adopt it in inextricable difficulties. In support of this opinion, they argue that, as it is acknowledged there is only one path of truth, it becomes evident that if the followers of Hanifa or any other Sunni saint be right, those of the remaining three must be wrong ; and they ask, "After all, is it not better to trust to what we have received from God, and his Prophet, and from those who lived during his mission, and have transmitted his sayings, than to give our minds over to these pretended doctors of divinity and law, and thus to constitute their fallible works the standard of faith and the rule of our lives ?" An amusing instance is recorded of this feeling of antipathy :—A Shia doctor of laws was once summoned to a meeting to discuss with four representatives of the orthodox sects an abstruse point of matrimonial usage. The learned follower of Ali, with a pretended clownish manner, instead of leaving his slippers at the door, secured them under his arm. This action produced much mirth, and the reason of so strange a proceeding was demanded. "We have a record in my family," said the man, "that one of our ancestors, who lived in the days of the Prophet, had his slippers stolen by a follower of Hanifa." All burst into laughter, and he was informed that the latter did not propagate his doctrine till a century after Muhammad's death. "It must have been a follower then of Malik." The mirth became louder ; the ignorant doctor was instructed that Malik came after Hanifa. "Then it was Shafi." "But this man was still later." "It must have been Hambal," said the Shia, affecting anger. This holy man, he was apprized, did not publish his works till the second century of the Hijra. The doctor started back with pretended surprise at this information, and exclaimed, "Why, if all you say be true, these holy saints, whose opinions you wish to make our laws, lived so long after the Prophet, that they could know no more than you or I, gentlemen, except as they might happen to be more or less learned." It will



scarce occasion surprise that the Shias acknowledge no head temporal or spiritual, each congregation representing a separate unit of authority in itself. Every doctor of the sect who has taken his degree at Karbala, or Ispahan, may deliver his "fatva" or opinion on points of doctrine, and the only test of his authority to preach or lead the prayer in mosques is his power of attracting a congregation. In theory, it is true, these votaries hold that there is an Imam or Khalif, but in practice they leave the title in abeyance; the advent of the Mahdi must, in the opinion of the Persians, be awaited to reunite Islam and restore its fortunes. It is somewhat singular, too, that the Shah, though absolute monarch to an extent which the more civilized nations of the West can hardly realize, is neither Imam nor Khalif—in fact, from a religious point of view, His Majesty is considered an usurper; nay more, he himself acknowledges that this is the case by the circumstance that he leases in legal form his palaces from a supposed representative of the Mahdi, with a view of enabling prayers to be offered up in their precincts to the spiritual profit of himself and other votaries; for it is a maxim amongst Muslims of all sects that prayer is not valid if made in another man's house without his permission. It is but natural that under such conditions, and in the absence of all restraining influence, the tendency to pander to popular prejudice is too great to be resisted, hence the Shias revel in the most wonderful tales of miracle and superstition. "You Christians," a Persian once said to Mr. Blunt, when the latter was travelling in Iran, "talk of your Christ as the Son of God, and think it strange; but with us the occurrence is a common one. Believe me, we have 'Sons of God' in nearly all our villages."

It will not have escaped notice that the religion of Muhammad involves the observance of a vast array of outward duties, such as fasting, praying, ablution, and many other obligations, some at least of which must of necessity be irksome and tedious. Hence the intense

longing which exists amongst the Shias for the advent of their Mahdi, on whose appearance all the wearisome ceremonial of the Muslim faith will, they suppose, be swept away, and mankind will have free licence to indulge in unrestrained enjoyment of the passions and desires.

That wild, strange ideas of religious latitude are in harmony with the feelings which animate the sect at large is evidenced by the circumstance, that the Persians not only teach but practise the doctrine that, in order to avoid persecution, a person may publicly profess any opinions he pleases, may deny any, or all, of the special doctrines of his sect ; he may even avow himself to be an orthodox Muhammadan. And at the time of the pilgrimage to Mecca pious votaries from Iran, whose zeal for their religion has taught them to endure without a murmur all the toils, the hardships, the dangers of a visit to the sacred city, may be heard cursing the twelve Imams whom their faith teaches them to deem as little less than God ; and yet the scene of this falsehood and deceit is, as they consider, the temple of the Almighty Creator whom they have assembled together to worship and adore !

The mass, however, of the Persian population do not repair to Mecca or Madina, but are satisfied with a pilgrimage to certain spots hallowed with the sacred traditions of their faith ; these are (1.) the tomb of Ali at Najaf near Kufa ; this was formerly elaborately bedecked, but early in the present century the Pasha of Baghdad, on the pretence that he feared the Arabs, despoiled the shrine of its treasures, which however, alas be it told, he subsequently omitted to return. (2.) The shrine of Husain at Karbala, near the ruins of Babylon. A magnificent mosque has been erected over this tomb, richly decorated with enamelled tiles, and surmounted by a gilded dome and arabesque minarets. By payment of an enormous sum a wealthy Persian can be buried in the interior of the mosque, near the tomb of the Imam ; but less favoured individuals are perforce

content with a resting-place in an outer court, a minor privilege for which, none the less, large sums are paid.

The corpses of the poorer classes are brought into the mosque, laid for a short time on the tomb of Husain, and then buried in some neighbouring cemetery. It is popularly supposed that according to the position of the place of burial in relation to Husain's tomb will be the position of the occupant of the grave on the day of resurrection ;—hence the desire to be near the Imam in his last resting-place in this world, so as to stand in proximity to him in the regions above. For which reason bodies are brought to Karbala from all parts of Persia, sometimes even in an advanced state of decomposition. In 1801 the Shrine was despoiled by the Wahhabis, but eighteen years later a pious Indian prince made good, at an expense of £21,000, the ravages of his bigoted co-religionists, and decorated the shrine with a canopy studded with emeralds, the pillars being of gold, interspersed with diamonds. (3.) The Mausoleum near Baghdad of Kazim the 7th Imam. (4.) The cavern near the latter city, where the twelfth and last Imam is supposed to be concealed. (5.) The tomb of Imam Riza the eighth Imam, a visit to which place entitles the votary to the appellation of “Mash-hadi,” and (6.) The mosque at Kum, containing the tomb of Fatima, the daughter of the said Imam Riza, the interior of which latter mosque is covered with gold and precious stones ; 700 servants are attached thereto, and an array of candles are continually burning ; so much is this sacred spot held in reverence, that many Persians pay large sums to be allowed to select a place proximate thereto where they may draw their last breath.

But in addition to these spots of recognized purity and sacredness, there are an immense number of inferior saints and martyrs at whose tombs the Persians offer up their prayers, while well-nigh every village can boast of some Shaikh, or holy person, whose character

has obtained him a local reputation, and rendered his shrine sacred amongst the surrounding hamlets.

The Shias accuse the Sunnis of using a mutilated Quran, and state that Ali possessed the only perfect copy of that sacred book ; this is supposed to have been in forty sections instead of thirty, the subdivision to which the more orthodox Muslims adhere. They also hold views totally at variance with the conceptions of their rivals in the faith, as regards the essence and attributes of God, notably in that they consider it wrong to ascribe to the Almighty movement, quiescence, &c., for these imply the possession of a body. They maintain, too, that God can never be seen, for that which is visible is limited by space.

A zealous Persian most conscientiously believes that his neighbour in India will be consigned to everlasting perdition for crossing his hands on his breast when he is saying his prayers, instead of letting them fall by his side agreeably to the practice of the followers of Ali ; these latter, too, attach a peculiar efficacy to the earth of Karbala, which they make up into discs to be placed on the ground when they bow themselves in prayer, so that at every prostration they may touch their forehead with the sacred dust of the martyrs. A Sunni on these occasions makes use of the dust of Mecca, to which he attaches equal veneration.—Another peculiarity between the two sects in connection with their devotions, relates to the mandate of the Prophet, which says, “ O Believers, when ye address yourselves to prayer, wash your hands up to the elbow, and *wipe* your heads, and your feet to the ankles.” This injunction is carried into effect by the Shias in its literal integrity, whereas the Sunnis not only wipe but wash the portions of the body in question. So great, indeed, are the differences of thought and feeling between the two sects, that tradition has proclaimed, and the followers of Ali would have it believed, that on the occasion of the Prophet’s visit to Heaven, he saw some people being cast into the

bottomless pit : feelings of compassion filled his heart, and he inquired as to the hapless beings about to be consigned to everlasting perdition : great was his astonishment, and it may well be conceived greater his mortification, to find that amongst the number were some of his own followers. But—and this was the cause of their condemnation—they were Sunnis !

It will thus be seen that the divergence between Shias and Sunnis is not confined to matters of faith, but affects the routine of daily life. Scarce, indeed, a ceremony but marks the rivalry of the respective votaries : marriage, divorce, slavery, all possess their distinctive features, and at every turn the faithful follower of Ali is reminded that he is “not as other men are.” The hatred, therefore, of the sectaries needs nothing to intensify its bitterness, or add to its violence ; but lest the breach should at any time be healed, and the schism of Islam be consigned to oblivion, tradition has founded the annual celebration of a religious drama, depicting the pains and anguish which the martyrs of the faith underwent on the fatal field of Karbala.

At the time of the Muharram, preparations are made in the various cities of Persia for the celebration of the Miracle play, and large tents, called “takyas,” are erected in the streets and open places : these are fitted up with black linen, and furnished with objects emblematical of the events connected with the massacre of Husain and his family on the field of Karbala, the expense being not infrequently borne by some rich man, anxious to conciliate his Creator by such an act of piety and devotion. The ceremonies commence on the 8th of the month, on which day “the Grand Vizier,” says Mr. Morier, who himself personally witnessed this strange scene—

“invited the whole of the Embassy to attend his takya. On entering the room, we found a large assembly of Persians clad in dark-coloured clothes, which, accompanied with their black caps, their black beards, and their dismal faces, really looked

as if they were *afflicting their souls*. We observed that *no man did put on his ornaments*. They neither wore their daggers, nor any parts of their dress which they look upon as ornamental. A Mulla of high consideration sat next to the Grand Vizier, and kept him in serious conversation, whilst the remaining part of the society communicated with each other in whispers. After he had sat some time, the windows of the room in which we were seated were thrown open, and we then discovered a priest placed on a high chair, under the covering of a tent, surrounded by a crowd of the populace : the whole of the scene being lighted up with candles. He commenced by an exordium, in which he reminded them of the great value of each tear shed for the sake of Imam Husain, which would be an atonement for a past life of wickedness ; and also informed them with much solemnity, that *whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted on the same day, it shall be cut off from among the people* (Lev. xxiii. 29). He then began to read from a book with a sort of nasal chant, that part of the tragic history of Husain appointed for the day, which soon produced its effect upon his audience, for he scarcely had turned over three leaves, before the Grand Vizier commenced to shake his head to and fro, to utter in a most piteous voice the usual Persian exclamation of grief, ' Vahi ! vahi ! vahi ! ' both of which acts were followed in a more or less violent manner by the rest of the audience. The chanting of the priest lasted nearly an hour, and some parts of his story were indeed pathetic, and well calculated to rouse the feelings of a superstitious and lively people. In one part of it, all the company stood up, and I observed the Grand Vizier himself towards the wall, with his hand extended before him, while he prayed. After the priest had finished, a company of actors appeared, some dressed as women, who chanted forth their parts from slips of paper, in a sort of recitative that was not displeasing even to our ears. In the very tragical parts, most of the audience appeared to cry very unaffectedly : and as I sat near the Grand Vizier, and to his neighbour the priest, I was witness to many real tears that fell from them. In some of these mournful assemblies it is the custom for a priest to go about to each person at the height of his grief, with a piece of cotton in his hand, with which he carefully collects the falling tears, and which he then squeezes into a bottle, preserving them with the greatest

caution. This practically illustrates that passage in the 56th Psalm, 8th verse, *Put thou my tears into thy bottle.* Some Persians believe that in the agony of death, when all medicines have failed, a drop of tears so collected, put into the mouth of a dying man, has been known to revive him: and it is for such use that they are collected.

"On the 'Ruz-i-Qatl,' or 'Day of Slaughter,' the tenth day, the Ambassador was invited by the King to be present at the termination of the ceremonies, in which the death of Husain was to be represented. We set off after breakfast, and placed ourselves in a small tent that was pitched for our accommodation over an arched gateway, which was situated close to the room in which His Majesty was to be seated.

"We looked upon the great *maidan*, or square, which is in front of the palace, at the entrance of which we perceived a circle of Kajars, or people of the king's own tribe, who were standing barefooted, and beating their breasts in cadence to the chanting of one who stood in the centre, and with whom they now and then joined their voices in chorus. *Smiting the breast* (St. Luke xviii. 13), is an universal act throughout the mourning: and the breast is made bare for that purpose, by unbuttoning the top of the shirt. The king, in order to show his humility, ordered the Kajars, among whom were many of his own relations, to walk about without either shoes or stockings, to superintend the order of the different ceremonies about to be performed: and they were to be seen stepping tenderly over the stones, with sticks in their hands, doing the duties of menials,—now keeping back a crowd, then dealing out blows with their sticks, and settling the order of the processions.

"Part of the square was partitioned off by an enclosure, which was to represent the town of Karbala, near which Husain was put to death: and close to this were two small tents, which were to represent his encampment in the desert with his family. A wooden platform, covered with carpets, upon which the actors were to perform, completed all the scenery on the occasion.

"A short time after we had reached our tent, the king appeared, and although we could not see him, yet we were soon apprised of his presence by all the people standing up, and by the bowing of his officers.

"The procession then commenced as follows :—First came

a stout man, naked from the waist upwards, balancing in his girdle a long, thick pole, surmounted by an ornament made of tin, curiously wrought with devices from the Quran, in height altogether about thirty feet. Then another, naked like the former, balanced an'ornamented pole in his girdle still more ponderous, though not so high, upon which a young darvish, resting his feet upon the bearer's girdle, had placed himself, chanting verses with all his might in praise of the King. After him a person of more strength, and more nakedness, a water-carrier, walked forward, bearing an immense leather sack, filled with water, slung over his back, on which, by way of bravado, four boys were piled one over the other. This personage, we were told, was emblematical of the great thirst which Husain suffered in the desert. A litter in the shape of a sarcophagus, which was called 'the Qabr-i-paighambar,' or 'tomb of the Prophet,' succeeded, born on the shoulders of eight men. On its front was a large, oval ornament, entirely covered with precious stones, and just above it, a great diamond star. On a small projection were two tapers placed on candlesticks enriched with jewels. The top and sides were covered with Kashmerian shawls, and on the summit rested a turban, intended to represent the head-dress of the Prophet. On each side walked two men bearing poles, from which a variety of beautiful shawls were suspended, and at the top of which were representations of Muhammad's hand, studded with jewellery.

"After this came four led horses, caparisoned in the richest manner. The fronts of their heads were ornamented with plates, entirely covered with diamonds, that emitted a thousand beautiful rays. Their bodies were dressed with shawls and gold stuffs, and on their saddles were placed some object emblematical of the death of Husain. When all these had passed, they arranged themselves in a row to the right of the king's apartment.

"After a short pause, a body of fierce-looking men, with only a loose white sheet thrown over their naked bodies, marched forward. They were all begrimed with blood; and each brandishing a sword, they sang a sort of hymn, the tones of which were very wild. These represented the sixty-two relations, or the martyrs, as the Persians call them, who accompanied Husain, and were slain in defending him. Close after them was a led white horse, covered with artificial



wounds, with arrows stuck all about him, and caparisoned in black, representing the horse upon which Husain was mounted when he was killed. A band of about fifty men, sticking two pieces of wood in their hands, completed the procession. They arranged themselves in rows before the King, and, marshalled by a *maître de ballet*, who stood in the middle to regulate their movements, they performed a dance, clapping their hands in the best possible time. The *maître de ballet* all this time sang in recitative, to which the dancers joined at different intervals with loud shouts and clapping of their pieces of wood.

"The processions were succeeded by tragedians. Husain came forward, followed by his wives, sisters and relatives. They performed many long and tedious acts: but as our distance from the stage was too great to hear the many affecting things which no doubt they said to each other, we will proceed at once to where the unfortunate Husain lay extended on the ground, ready to receive the death stroke from a ruffian dressed in armour, who acted the part of executioner. At this moment a burst of lamentation issued from the multitude, and sobs and real tears came from almost every one of those who were near enough to come under our inspection. The indignation of the populace wanted some object upon which to vent itself, and it fell upon those of the actors who had performed the parts of Yazid's soldiers. No sooner was Husain killed, than they were driven off the ground by a volley of stones, followed by shouts of abuse. We were informed that it is so difficult to procure performers to fill these characters, that on the present occasion a party of Russians were pressed into the army of Yazid, and they made as speedy an exit after the catastrophe as was in their power.

"The scene terminated by the burning of Karbala. Several reed huts had been constructed behind the inclosure before mentioned, which, of a sudden were set on fire. The tomb of Husain was seen covered with black cloth, and upon it sat a figure disguised in a *tiger's* skin, which was intended to represent the miraculous *lion* recorded to have kept watch over his remains after he had been buried. The most extraordinary part of the whole exhibition was the representation of the dead bodies of the martyrs, who, having been decapitated, were all placed in a row, each body with a head close to it. To effect this, several Persians buried themselves alive, leaving

the head out just above ground ; whilst others put their heads under ground, leaving out the body. The heads and bodies were placed in such relative positions to each other, as to make it appear they had been severed. This is done by way of penance : but in hot weather the violence of the exertion has been known to produce death. The whole ceremony was terminated by the 'Khutba,' which is an action of prayer for Muhammad, his descendants, and for the property of the King, and was delivered in a loud voice by a man *the best crier of his time* (as Xenophon calls Tolmides) who is celebrated for his strong voice, and, indeed, deservedly so, for at about 50 yards distance from us we heard every word he said, notwithstanding the noise of the multitude which surrounded us."



TAZIA.

To this description it is necessary to add that one of the principal personages in this singular drama is a fictitious European Ambassador, probably Greek, who is present when the head of Husain is exhibited to Yazid, and who loudly protests against the massacre ; an act of indiscretion for which he is rewarded with the crown of martyrdom. There is always great anxiety that the costume of his Excellency should be European, and, if possible, military ; but above all a cocked hat and feathers are highly prized ; and it is not unfrequently the case that an uniform which has decked the breast of a valiant British son of Mars is made to do duty on the back of a stalwart actor of Iran.

The more fanatical Shias yearly hold a sort of Guy

Fawkes day, when a comic "tazia" commemorative of Omar is held, and the usurper is finally conducted to the infernal regions by the Arch Fiend in person. On the other hand, the less devout make amends for the extra piety of their faithful brethren by ogling the ladies on the occasion of an interval in the performance, and sometimes, alas be it said, during the most touching and pathetic parts of the ceremonies ; while the serious and sober of the assembly are compelled at times to smile at the contests of the fair dames in their struggles to secure an eligible seat ; indeed, it would be difficult to avoid being amused at the blows and scratches with which the pugnacious devotees endeavour to assert their rights. There is, truth to tell, a story current that on one occasion a stripling, destined in after years to become a high functionary of State, threw amongst the throng of tightly-packed pushing and tearing daughters of Eve, a basin of young frogs ; the confusion and distress of the fair devotees may well be imagined, but their shrieks and screams, followed by the laughter of the sterner sex, must have contrasted somewhat strangely with the sad and dismal scene of woe, which the assembly had met together to celebrate.

In considering this subject, it must not be overlooked, as has been pointed out by M. Gobineau, that Husain is not only the son of Ali, he is the husband of a princess of royal blood—he, his father, all the Imams, taken collectively, represent the Persian nation, overthrown, vexed, dispirited, depopulated by their Arab conquerors : hence the emotion displayed at the performance of the Miracle play is sacred. If any one were to remain cold and unappreciative he would be less than a man to be insensible to cruelty and injustice. Nor would he be a Muslim, inasmuch as he would not in that case dare to despise the family of the Prophet ; lastly, and above all, he would not be a Persian in so far as he had failed to recognize what he, who is the personification of his country, had suffered, and what the land itself had undergone.

The scenes, in every instance, depict some thrilling events connected with the story of "Hasan and Husain" the martyrs of Karbala, but they vary from time to time: in fact the "Shabia Sazi" or, as he would be termed in the West "impresario," of whom there are about five or six scattered throughout Persia, turns his steps at the time of the approach of the Muharram towards the great cities of the land, such as Teheran, Ispahan, Shiraz, &c., and produces out of his collection, which usually numbers 100 scenes, such of them as are most suited to the occasion, being guided in his choice by numerous considerations of the moment. So that the miracle play varies in each city and in every year. The representation lasts ten days, on each of which the audience is harassed with a fresh tale of woe.

There are no acts or scenes, properly so called, nor is there a curtain, but as each subject terminates the actors leave the stage; these latter are mostly well up in their rôles, though they carry a small scroll from which, when memory fails, they calmly read their part. In addition, however, to the professional actors there are numerous supernumeraries, mostly volunteers eager to "compound for the sins they have a mind to," by assisting in an act of devotion, which they consider expiates for many a deed of ill and wickedness committed during the other months of the year.

Piety, too, prompts the orthodox to contribute to the performance articles to deck the stage; and the miscellaneous array of cups, saucers, dishes, plates, and other worldly possessions, which meet the eye, would gladden the heart of a dealer in curiosities.

The strangeness of a strange scene, too, is considerably heightened by the circumstance that it is not deemed incumbent upon the actors to shave their faces; so that a sweet angelic cherub, supposed to have alighted on earth from the regions of bliss, appears in some instances before the audience with a huge dark grizzly beard, entirely inconsistent with the notion of a heavenly messenger, who is universally depicted in the

West with a sweet innocent face of youthful simplicity.

The pay assigned to the professional actor varies according to the talent of the individual, and the estimation in which he is held by the public ; in some cases it amounts to as much as £100 or £150 ; the recipient of such a sum is treated with immense respect when he appears in the street, more especially by the troops of children, who are petrified at the appearance of so august a personage ; amongst his companions, too, it is etiquette that he should give himself airs—so that at times he is pleasant and affable, while at others he is cross and peevish—if flattery fail in amount or quality, he will refuse to play ; he is, forsooth, a star in the firmament of religious art.

The more important, however, of all those who take part in the performance is the “Ruza-khan”—a reciter of the traditions concerning the martyrdom of the Imams—the life and soul of the piece. He must be eloquent, fascinating and learned, and, as the office is both lucrative and honourable, its possessors are not unfrequently Sayyids or descendants of an Imam, in which case the turban and girdle are either green or black, in place of white the ordinary colour.

Sir Lewis Pelly has published a translation of a collection of scenes in this strange “Miracle Play ;” but for the information of the unenlightened it may be stated, that in addition to the slaughter and destruction of the martyrs and their families, who are murdered amidst the wails and lamentations of an appreciative audience, the angel Gabriel descends from the skies attended by his ministering angels, all radiant in spangle wings, not alas to assist the band of heroes in their sore and dismal plight, but merely to deprecate the hard lot of the Prophet’s offspring. The king, too, of the “Jinns,” with his army appears, but, again, not to help but only to mourn ; the example of the angelic band has, it would seem, proved fatal. Moses, attired as an Arab Shaikh, Jesus Christ in rags and tatters,

and even Muhammad himself gorgeously apparelled in silver silk and raiment of Kashmir—one and all revisit the earth, and are stricken with the general contagion of grief; not a soul however raises a finger in defence of the slaughtered heroes—till at length the murderer does his work amidst an universal outburst of sorrow and indignation!

The sadness of the scenes which are witnessed is in some measure counterbalanced by the comforts for the inner man which abound. Here there is to be seen the lowliest of the low, for the admission is free to all irrespective of position, resting in a seat, the elegant fittings of which but ill accord with the poverty of his garments, while he sips coffee from a cup handed to him perchance by the proudest son of the proudest nation of earth; there a cut-throat from Shiraz is perfuming his moustaches with rose water, from an ewer borne by the flower of Persian nobility; while the pipe, on this occasion the pipe of peace, sends its fragrance through an assembly, the most motley the most varied, the most inconceivable which imagination can depict. While all this is taking place, others are to be seen refreshing their parched lips with iced water, a remembrance of the thirst which the martyrs of Karbala suffered ere their spirits fled to the mansions of bliss. Lest, however, there should be any failure in weeping, cakes are handed round, composed of peas, melon seeds, and millet, ground into a paste, a concoction which is said to possess the charm of producing a copious flow of tears; lastly, but more important than all, the weaker sex eat freely of gum mastic, for the singular reason that not only does it clean the teeth, sweeten the breath, and strengthen the gums, but it predisposes them not to talk much, a virtue which at such a time it may well be imagined is of inestimable value.

Such is the history of Islam, with its quaint ceremonies, its fatiguing devotions, and its trying hardships. It forms a remarkable chapter in the history of the world, for it teaches the lesson that, whether the doc-

trine of Muhammad be the religion of a false messenger from on high, as some assert; or the divinely inspired faith delivered by the Almighty to his Apostle, the Prophet of Arabia, as is the belief of the Muslim world, it is, at any rate, a creed which has taken deep root in the minds of the nation. When indeed, we find, as is the case in regard to the rites of the "Hajj," that the high and mighty of the land abandon all the luxuries of life to undergo the toil, the troubles, the dangers of a journey to the Holy Cities of Arabia, is it not a striking testimony to the power of the teachings of the Quran, telling forth throughout the length and breadth of the habitable world the faith which millions upon millions of mankind feel in the doctrines they profess; should not such earnestness, such zeal, aye, and it must be added such piety, shame the weak-hearted devotion of modern Christians (?) Humiliating indeed, as is the confession, it must be avowed that the simple trust and confidence of the Musulmans in *their* God proclaim, in language which is unmistakeable, that as regards fervour and honesty of purpose the devotees of the West must give place to the worshippers in the East! Does not the prayer of each votary in the Mosque of Mecca, when imploring the aid, and seeking to avert the wrath of the Creator in whom the pilgrim is taught to believe, seem to resound through the vault of Heaven, bidding the indifferent and half-hearted people of Christendom follow the example of zeal which the Muhammadan worship affords? May we one and all read the writing on the wall, and bow the head in humble submission, as the voice of conscience utters the words of gentle reproof—"Go thou and do likewise."





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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".







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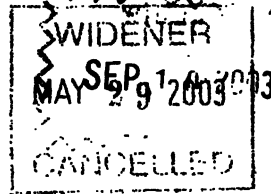
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